

Histories of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto

Throughout the years, the presidents and historians of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto have written histories of the Club. These histories enable future generations of Club members to understand and appreciate their past. They provide us with examples of the amazing achievements of our Club as well as honest appraisals of mistakes made. Although the Club Archives contain minutes of Board meetings from 1894 to the present, these histories provide a more intimate and colorful recollection of the past. Subjective as they may be, the writers bear witness to the events which formed the Club of today. They bring to mind the famous quip by Winston Churchill: "History will be kind to me for I intend to write it."

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2. Obituary of Mary Grafton Campbell, November 25, 1913 by Julia R. Gilbert
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History of the Library

1894 - 1903

by

Julia Gilbert President

1902-1904

delivered on

November 18, 1903

at

Carnegie Library Cornerstone Ceremony

History of the Library, 1903

I have been asked to give the history of the library as founded and developed by the Woman's Club of Palo Alto; the library which owes its existence primarily to the faith and works of Mrs. Mary Grafton Campbell, and secondarily to the public spirit of our citizens.

by

Julia Gilbert

President 1902-1904

It is yet an open secret that there was a time when Palo Alto had no Public Library, no Reading Room, no Board of Trade, no Woman's Club, no philanthropic organization of any kind except that Philanthropist of all work, Mrs. Zachokke. As time went on, churches, schools, and other offices sprang up, the town grew and the Young Men's Association was organized. This body, moved by our illiterate community, opened a reading room in lower Nortree Hall. This reading room maintained a modest existence for a time, but in the winter of 1896 the Association, for reasons of its own, found it wise to disband. It had acquired in its reading room a little furniture, a few periodicals, a small subscription list, and a small debt. Before the Association could be given honorable burial it was necessary to dispose of these matters. By this time a Mother's Club of the town had developed into a full-fledged Woman's Club, and to it the Association agreed to turn over its entire assets.

The Woman's Club looked askance at an undertaking of such magnitude through the energy and perseverance of Mrs. Campbell the Board undertook the work.

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I have been asked to give a short account of the Palo Alto Public Library as founded and developed by the Woman's Club of Palo Alto; the library which owes its existence primarily to the faith and works of Mrs. Mary Grafton Campbell, and secondarily to the public spirit of our citizens.

It is yet an open secret that there was a time when Palo Alto had no Public Library, no Reading Room, no Board of Trade, no Woman's Club, no philanthropic organization of any kind except that Philanthropist of all work, Mrs. Zschokke. As time went on, churches and real estate offices sprang up, the town grew and the Young Men's Christian Association was organized. This body, moved by our illiterate condition, opened a reading room in lower Nortree Hall. This reading room maintained a modest existence for a time, but in the winter of 1896 the Association, for reasons of its own, found it wise to disband. It had acquired in its reading room a little furniture, a few periodicals, a small subscription list, and a small debt. Before the Association could be given honorable burial it was necessary to dispose of these matters. By this time a Mother's Club of the town had developed into a full-fledged Woman's Club, and to it the Association agreed to turn over its entire assets.

The Woman's Club looked askance at an undertaking of such magnitude through the energy and perseverance of Mrs. Campbell the Board undertook the work.

A room on the corner of University and High street was rented; every able-bodied mechanic in town was induced to lend a hand in its very necessary renovation, and on February 13, 1897, the Woman's Club formally opened its Free Reading Room.

The club appointed a committee of five or six women, who canvassed the town for subscriptions and collected them each month at great expense of time and strength; a second committee secured the use of periodicals after the owners had read them, and collected these each week, a third set of women took each one day in the week when she would collect from the offices of The Times and Live Oak the exchanges which they so kindly gave us, take them to the reading room and sort and arrange the chaotic pile of periodicals which greeted us afresh each morning. These committees gave occupation to about the whole available force of the Woman's Club.

At the end of the first year the club felt that the need of a public reading room had been fully demonstrated, but the ubiquitous hoodlum had further demonstrated that a wide-open reading room was not desirable. The club had collected and expended during the year about \$200, to employ a custodian for even part of the day would require twice that amount. Finally with magnificent courage they agreed to canvass twice as hard to raise twice the amount. A librarian was employed for a part of the day. The miscellaneous assortment of books, which had been secured through two "book socials", was brought to the room and installed in a case which could be securely locked at night, when the room was open but without supervision. Ten public-spirited men were found who contributed \$1.00 apiece to buy 100 volumes of fiction from an abandoned library in the city and those were added to the shelves.

So, in February 1898, we passed from our first stage of reading room into that of infant library. We felt as proud of our 300 volumes, locked in a press at night, the doors alluringly open by day, distributed by the most primitive system, as we do today, for our library was born and ready to grow.

By the close of our second year the usefulness of our reading room and young library had been so fully proven that generous friends came forward with substantial aid; yearly subscriptions were asked instead of monthly ones and our ever appreciative townspeople responded liberally. The Town gave us a monthly appropriation of \$20.00, sets of encyclopedias were presented, several entertainments were given, and in January 1899, almost before we knew it, we

were installed in our present comfortable room, with a librarian giving us all access to volumes, conducted by approved library methods. Thus we entered upon our third stage of sturdy growth.

The hoodlum still felt that supervision in the evening was tyranny, and he resented it in every possible way, from being noisy to leaving dead rats in the chair behind him, but time and the librarian's smile have softened his heart, and he now takes his pleasures sadly with the rest of us.

For three years the library grew along these lines, slowly but surely, never flinching from the original determination that, cost what it might, the privileges of the library should be absolutely free to all. During these three years it was supported by the \$20.00 per month from the town, personal subscriptions solicited by the women of the club, a monthly appropriation from the club, and entertainments given by the club "for the benefit of the library" became a town watchword.

In January 1902, the town raised our appropriation to \$50 per month and in the fall of 1902, the close of the fiscal year, the Woman's Club took stock. It found that it was expending for the library from \$1000 to \$1200 a year; up to that date it had received and disbursed \$4258. We had on our shelves a choice library of 2,300 volumes and on our tables all the leading periodicals. Through these books and periodicals we were influencing the thought and lives of over one thousand people. Such an institution properly belonged to the Town itself. The recent library law empowered the town authorities to support a library, and in October 1902, the Public Library of the Woman's Club was formally transferred to the Trustees of the Town of Palo Alto.

Obituary of Mary Grafton Campbell

by

Julia R. Gilbert
November 25, 1913

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Mrs. Mary Grafton Campbell has died in Palo Alto to die with a simple notice of her death. Mary Grafton Campbell began with the inception of the free reading room at the Women's Club. I knew her as a woman of broad culture, wide experience and great native ability. Stanford University, with its fresh enthusiasm and its freedom of thought, called her irresistibly and for it she cast her lot with the scattered inhabitants of a little village.

She was a natural social leader but her life was so dominated by her altruistic philosophy that common society, although had little attraction for her. Instead she gave herself first to her home and husband, and next to the various scientific work she had undertaken in the university. Through these all she had and was more gloriously in the development and spirit of Palo Alto.

She first organized the women of Palo Alto into a "mother's club," which soon developed into the Palo Alto Women's Club. On this organization she was president for four years. The organization and impetus given the club during those years will linger with the members. There is no higher work, including the home, than to work in the home with her constant theme.

Mrs. Campbell was generous but she was not visionary. The things she foresaw she worked for until they became accomplished facts. When she ambitious but not ambitious she would not have been so modest. When she was out and about - as business she would not have been so modest. When she was out and about - as business she would not have been so modest. When she was out and about - as business she would not have been so modest.

She rolled over that of the day when Palo Alto would have its own free public library and that end she worked unceasingly. She lived to see her vision

realized, and somewhere in the library building should be a memorial tablet to this mother of the library.

No appreciation of Mrs. Campbell's character would be complete that failed to speak of her great motherly love and care to many children - thirteen girls and boys of other mothers she reared in part or fully. It was the attitude of motherhood that she unconsciously assumed toward every infant, enterprise or needy person who came within her influence and the Woman's Club as well as the library stand as her memorials in Palo Alto.

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Mrs. Mary Grafton Campbell has meant too much to Palo Alto to die with a simple notice of her death. My own close association with her began with the inception of the free reading room in the second year of the Woman's Club. I knew her as a woman of broad culture, wide experience and great native ability. Stanford University, with its fresh enthusiasm and its freedom of thought, called her irresistibly and for it she cast her lot with the scattered inhabitants of a little village.

She was a natural social leader but her life was so dominated by her altruistic philosophy that common society triumphs had little attraction for her. Instead she gave herself first to her home and husband, and next to the serious scientific work she had undertaken in the university. Beyond these all she had and was were given freely to the development and uplift of Palo Alto.

She first organized the women of Palo Alto into a "mother's club," which soon developed into the Palo Alto Woman's Club. Of this organization she was president for four years. The inspiration and impetus given the club during those years still lingers with its members. Home in its highest sense, including the home town as well as the home walls, was her constant theme.

Mrs. Campbell saw visions but she was not visionary. The things she foresaw she worked for until they became accomplished facts. When the ambitious but poverty-stricken reading room needed funds she reassured us - and went out and begged the needed money. When I hesitated to ask for contributions, she would exclaim cheerily, "Why, it is offering people a privilege, let me ask them!"

She talked even then of the day when Palo Alto would have its own free public library and toward that end she worked unceasingly. She lived to see her vision

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No appreciation of Mrs. Campbell's character would be complete that failed to speak of her great mother-heart. Losing her own baby she gave love and care to many children – thirteen girls and boys of other mothers she reared in part or fully. It was the attitude of motherhood that she unconsciously assumed toward every infant, enterprise or needy person that came within her influence and the Woman's Club as well as the library stand as her memorials in Palo Alto.

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President 1906-1907

1894 - 1924

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delivered on

December 19, 1924

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The original purpose of the Club was for improvement, mutual help and community work. Among its activities were the planting and caring for shade trees, supplying cans to receive street rubbish, improving school grounds, encouraging school garden-making, establishing and furnishing a lunch and rest room for girls at the high school and the organizing of the public library.

The first book social for the library took place in March 1896 and the library opened a year or so later. It was not, however, until 1901 that the library became a town institution. High tribute goes to Mrs. Julia R. Gilbert, a member of the club in whose memory a bronze tablet has been placed on the fireplace of the enlarged library building.

The club worked to give assistance to afflicted families during the typhoid epidemic of 1903 and took part in the establishment of milk inspection.

In 1904, the club incorporated and enlarged the scope of its work. The first executive board of the corporation was made up of Mrs. J. S. Lakin, Mrs. E. V. Baldwin, Mrs. E. F. Weisshaar, Mrs. F. A. Stuart, Mrs. C. H. Gilbert, Mrs. L. M. Wyckoff, Mrs. George Parkinson, Mrs. H. F. Perry, Mrs. J. J. Morris, Mrs. Edwood Varney and Mrs. D. L. Sloan. It was immediately following this that the members began to dream of a clubhouse and the long campaign which ultimately, in 1915-1916, brought the present building into existence.

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The original purpose of the club was three-fold - self-improvement, mutual help and community work. Among its activities were the planting and caring for shade trees, supplying cans to receive street rubbish, improving school grounds, encouraging school garden-making, establishing and furnishing a lunch and rest room for girls at the high school and the organizing of the public library.

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Among the outstanding leaders in the work for the clubhouse were Mrs. E. K. Dixon under whose direction a descriptive booklet of the Santa Clara Valley was put out and sold, netting about \$1,500; Mrs. E. G. Greene, Mrs. C. G. Dingley, Mrs. A. M. Coburn during whose tenure of office the house was built and Mrs. M. A. Buchan, during whose presidency the mortgage was finally burned.

Another efficient president, to whom Mrs. Stuart paid tribute was Mrs. C. T. Morrison, under whom the club carried on its activities for the soldiers in training at Camp Fremont, activities which have since developed into a large work for disabled veterans at the former "Base Hospital." The present recipients of aid from the club are the Boy and Girl scouts, Business Women's club, Community House, etc.

In closing, a special word of appreciation goes to the "faithful few" who carried on the work of the Club as well as for the larger membership which has assisted.

Early Club History

1894-1940

by

Mrs. C. H. Barnard

(President 1927 - 1929)

Early Club History, 1894 - 1940

The Beginning - 1894: Pursuant to a call for a general meeting of the ladies of Palo Alto, a number met Wednesday, June 13. Mrs. M. G. Campbell was temporary chairman; Mrs. Anna Zschokke acted as secretary.

by

June 20, 1894: The Constitution:

I. The association shall be called The Woman's Club of Palo Alto

II. The object of the association shall be self-improvement, mutual help and community work.

III. To carry out these objects the club shall be divided into four departments, namely: Home and Household, Education and Science, Philanthropy, Art and Literature.

Section II: Each of these four departments shall be in charge of a committee which shall be responsible for its work and the program of its meetings.

1898: Amendment: To add the Department of Village Improvement.

Season of 1894 - 1898: The early history of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto is so closely interwoven with that of the City of Palo Alto and Stanford University, that to tell of one is to touch upon the others. Few clubs have a richer heritage of a more colorful one.

The club's beginning was June 20, 1894, two months after the incorporation of the town site of Palo Alto with a population of 740, as a town, or technically, a city sixth class. Senator Leland Stanford, with his wife, Jane Lathrop Stanford founded the university as a memorial to their son, Leland Junior who had passed away the year before and legal entanglements were endangering the existence of this young and promising seat of learning, doors to which had only been opened in 1891.

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Claiming that Mr. Stanford was liable for the obligations of the Central Pacific Railroad, of which he was one of the organizers, the government had brought

suit to prevent distribution of the estate. Palo Alto's belief in the integrity of the Stanfords, its great pride in the new "college" – its president, Dr. Jordan – Dr. David Starr Jordan, and its interesting faculty families, was demonstrated in sympathy and ready help given at this critical time.

The Community merchants though few, were especially cooperative and much praise is given to the late S. W. LaPiere, the grocer who "carried the professors on his books" until salaries were again paid. His wife, Mrs. Anna LaPiere was an early, active club member and still lives in Palo Alto.

Stanford Professor's Lecture: Women of the faculty families became club members and the professors gave lectures at regular club meetings or at town benefit gatherings under club auspices. Dr. Jordan was a frequent speaker. Some of these recorded lecture reports make interesting reading, especially those on civic planning with suggestions for city hall and park sites, while we ponder on the "what might have been". Such a lecture was given by Stanford's Prof. Nathan Abbott at the club's meeting place, Fraternal Hall, on the afternoon of Wednesday, October 6, 1898. Its title, "Thames Conservancy", gave no inkling of town planning suggestions but with a call in the press for a full and prompt attendance of club members, the lecture was heralded as having "a direct bearing upon a matter of local importance."

Prof. Abbott told of how the river Thames and its banks were cared for by the London commission, the result – "a beautiful park 175 miles long – an artistic pleasure ground." He said "Palo Alto has within its bounds an opportunity for a beautiful park of this nature and San Francisquito creek could be cared for from its mouth to Searsville dam, a lively drive and bicycle path could be made on both sides, crossing over the embankment and down to the University, striking the creek again at that point." He suggested a series of light retaining dams "to give a stretch of six miles of waterway for boating, adding that "the engineering difficulties would be slight and the results charming."

Exchanged Appreciation: A number of Stanford professors and instructors established substantial homes for their families in Palo Alto and that portion of the town in which they were well represented was referred to as "Professorville". Town and campus dweller alike found complete accord with the aims of the club and the clubwomen voiced appreciation of the university. Expressive of this is the following from the local press in the annual club report in the year 1900: "Owing to its close proximity to a flourishing university the club has the

advantage of experienced teachers who inspire it to live up to its objectives of self improvement, mutual help and community work."

With pageant appeal, events and the personalities behind them are unfolded to us in old club records and newspaper clippings establishing the Woman's Club of Palo Alto's leadership in those early days. The minutes of the club keynote the early town history. These minutes for the most part are models of comprehensive brevity, show in the influence of our first president, Mrs. Mary Grafton Campbell, an experienced clubwoman and able parliamentarian, who had "drilled" the new clubwomen in parliamentary procedure.

Mother of the Woman's Club: It was the University which attracted the gracious, intellectual Mary Grafton Campbell (Mrs. Ernest L.) to Palo Alto where she was destined to be known as "The Mother of the Woman's Club. Mrs. Campbell was elected as president five consecutive years, but owing to ill health and frequent absences from Palo Alto, she resigned her office in January 1899, though she retained her club membership and for a number of years came to meetings from San Francisco. She was also called upon to address the club.

Mrs. Kate Kellogg Hutchinson (Mrs. Joseph) took Mrs. Campbell's place much of the 1898 - 1899 season. For the 1899 - 1900 club year when Minnie Bliss Culver became president, Mrs. Campbell became vice president at large.

Organization: In the Palo Alto Times of June 8, 1894 this arresting item appeared: "All interested in the organization of a Palo Alto Woman's Club will meet June 13 at 3 p. m. at the Presbyterian church."

The desire was to contact as many as possible of the community's women and there was an appreciable attendance in the anteroom of the old Presbyterian Church situated in what is now the 500 block of Waverley Street. Mrs. Campbell presided as chairman and Mrs. Anna P. Zschokke as acting secretary at the meeting and the following one held in the same place on June 20 when the constitution was voted upon and signed by 24 women and officers were elected.

"The genesis of the club, however, was months previous to this gathering for a group of women holding mother's meetings conceived the idea of enjoying broader work" as Mrs. F. A. Stuart tells us in her paper titled "A Brief Sketch of Club History" written in 1924 when the club was thirty years old and a few charter members lived to approve this part of the club's story.

Mrs. Anna Paddock Wing and her committee are given credit for their diligent work months before in studying the constitutions and programs of women's clubs from many places. The women serving with Mrs. Wing were Mesdames Hoskins, Sloan, Thoburn and Field. Mrs. Sloan, Mrs. Wing and Mrs. Hoskins were wives of Stanford professors. Mrs. Wing was the first wife of Prof. Charles B. Wing.

Quoting from Mrs. F. A. Stuart's paper: "Pending the adoption of some definite line of work, the club meetings were held with regular programs, Mrs. Wing presiding. The constitution of a Chicago club seemed to be an excellent basis on which to proceed, and when Mrs. Campbell came to Palo Alto and it was ascertained that she had been a member of the Chicago club and was thoroughly familiar with its work and heartily in favor of starting a similar club here, interest in the project quickened and the club was born."

Election of Officers: Under the date, June 20, 1894, Mrs. Zschokke who was made secretary pro tem in order to officially record the events of the day writes: "The following nominees selected by a committee were elected by acclimation: President Mrs. Mary G. Campbell, Vice President Mrs. Minnie B. Culver and Secretary Mrs. Cora F. Warner."

And Now – City Mothers: The secretary Pro Tem records "The president then made a stirring address congratulating Palo Alto upon being no longer a sort of half orphan but now having both city fathers and mothers, thus ensuring a prosperous future."

Season of 1899 – 1900: Publicity in the fall of 1899 about the September Reception: "Fraternity Hall was the scene on Wednesday of a large gathering of women interested in the Woman's Club of Palo Alto. The club membership of 125 was amply represented and guests numbering over two hundred swelled the throng of friendly and enthusiastic women. The assembly was called to order for a short meeting, Mrs. Hutchinson presiding. The secretary, Mrs. Dodge, read an interesting report, and announced the names of the officers for the coming year, who were elected at the annual meeting of the club in May. The names were as follows: President Mrs. M. B. Culver, Vice President at Large Mrs. Mary G. Campbell, First Vice President Mrs. S. A. Dyer, Second Vice President Mrs. J. D. Little, Third Vice President Mrs. S. K. Bradford. Heads of Departments: Household Economics Mrs. F. W. Sherman, Science and Education Mrs. A. L.

Corbert, Philanthropy Miss Hughes, Art and Literature Miss Isabel Butler, Treasurer Mrs. I. D. Emerson, Secretary Mrs. Olive Dodge.

The absence of Mrs. Campbell, so long the beloved president of the club was much regretted. Her report will be read at the next regular meeting. Among the reports read for the past Year by heads of departments were Mrs. Dayan's for the Village Improvement Committee and Mrs. Gilbert's for the library. Of the latter it is reported: "Mrs. Gilbert in behalf of the library, gave an interesting account of this important branch of the club's work." To Mrs. Gilbert and Mrs. Denton all praise is due for their devotion to and activity in this enterprise.

Another of the memorable Village Improvement Committee entertainments: This is on the clipping book of February 1899 of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto as compiled by Mrs. Hudson Dodge, Secretary. It is headed: "Vaudeville Entertainment" and reads:

"The entertainment at Nortree Hall Tuesday evening under the auspices of the Village Improvement Committee of the Woman's Club was a decided success. It was a benefit to beautify the streets. The hall was thronged, many being unable to gain admittance. There was not a number on the Program that was not enjoyable, the selections of the Stanford Glee and Mandolin Clubs being especially well received.

The Stanford Girls' Glee in their white duck uniforms presented a very handsome appearance. This was their first formal appearance and their singing made a good impression.

Dr. G. B. Little and Mr. F. H. Wright in the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet" while Dr. Little's interpretation of the part of Romeo would have done credit to a professional."

Mrs. Ross and Miss Winifred Morgan sang. "The enthusiastic encore given by Miss May G. Kimball's banjo solo showed that her selections were appreciated. Dick Culver gave one of his inimitable chalk talks and the program closed with a selection by the Palo Alto Band. Many remained to enjoy the dancing which continued until midnight."

"The success of the evening reflects great credit on the enthusiastic labors of the members of the Village Improvement Committee who are working so zealously

to improve and beautify the streets. This committee is composed of Mrs. J. W. Dayan, chairman and Mesdames Marx, Button, Wright and Miss E. C. Hughes.

Mrs. Ross sang "Sunset" and "The Road to Mandalay" was sung by Miss Winifred Morgan. Stanford Glee Club sang "There was a Tack", an old, humorous one that is a favorite for Glee clubs and quartets. "Three Little Maids from School" was sung by Mrs. Silsby, Mrs. Ross and Miss Lunt. Glee Club numbers were "Mammy's Little Yellar Gal" and "A Charming Fellow."

It would be an excellent idea to have these songs in in a quartette at anniversary programs especially the song "There was a Tack."

Season of 1901 - 1902: Mrs. H. Mazie Parkinson (Mrs. J. W.) who was club president the season of 1901 - 1902, attended the spring 1902 biennial convention of the California Federation held in San Francisco and had much to report of this meeting to the club upon her return. The State Federation was new and at this meeting its motto and emblem were both selected. The motto, "Strength United is Stronger" was chosen from many submitted. Its author was Mrs. Annie Little Barry, then president of the San Francisco Corona Club. She later served as San Francisco District president and as State Federation president. Mrs. Barry had many friends in Palo Alto.

Season of 1903 - 1904: Urged by a number of citizens to promote a town gymnasium of special benefit to high school students, the club voted favorably for the venture. The opening date was Monday, January 25, 1904.

A chapter of the Needlework Guild of America was organized under club auspices with three sections. A club member, Mrs. Ellen Coit Elliott, wife of Prof. O. Elliot of Stanford headed the committee for its promotion. These sewing sections became very popular for the women realized their worth. It was known that when sudden disaster came to any portion of the United States, the national head of the Guild sent a call to all chapters. Bed linen and clothing was donated to homes and hospitals or individual cases in a community.

Renovation with re-tinting and painting of the High School restroom for girls was accomplished in February in response to a request from a high school committee of Mrs. Meers and teachers. Furnishings were donated and a cabinet for china and plate ware purchased. Enthusiastic letters of thanks were received from the High School committee.

December 7, 1903 – The executive board recommended the election of our first president, Mrs. Mary G. Campbell as an honorary member of the club and as such she was voted at a regular meeting.

At the second meeting in March, the club was incorporated under the laws of the state of California for a 50-year period. Upon invitation of the president Mrs. Gilbert, Judge A. W. Charles in January gave an informative talk on the subject at the club's meeting at Fraternity Hall. Later each club member was notified in writing of the date when incorporation would be voted upon. The committee, acting with the president to draw up articles of incorporation, were Mesdames Bradford, Sloan, Perry and Fletcher.

Season of 1904 – 1905: Mrs. J. S. Lakin's first year as president was highlighted by the meeting here of the San Francisco District Federation convention in November 1904. It was the first time the district (*Loma Prieta* District) had held a convention away from the city. 72 delegates from 14 counties participated. An entertainment feature was a visit to Stanford University and an organ recital at the church.

Season of 1905 -1906: The Woman's Club of Palo Alto became a member of the Woman's County Alliance upon invitation of the San Jose club. A Cook Book was compiled by club members, the printing of which amounted to \$50, and sales were of profitable financial benefit to the club. Mrs. J. S. Lakin had this project in charge. The purchase of a public park site in the Seale tract was a spirited topic of discussion and tree care as usual was one of the club's activities. Sixteen shade trees had been replaced and Mrs. Sloan and Mrs. Weishaar were asked to continue as tree custodians during the summer.

Season of 1908 – 1909: The club's Peace program on December 16, was in charge of Mrs. Alice Park. "Strong remarks on peace and the absurdities of war were made by Mrs. Park." Mrs. Tyler gave a review of the book Lay Down Your Arms and Mrs. E. A. Soper read a paper by J. D. Houser titled, "The Ethics of War" which was one of the peace essays to receive the Bonheim prize.

Season of 1910 – 1911: One of the most financially profitable and worthwhile projects ever undertaken by the club was the publication of an illustrated promotion magazine or booklet of 100 pages, titled, "Santa Clara Valley". Mrs.

Emily S. Karns who became Mrs. Dixon in 1916 edited and compiled the magazine with the assistance of a committee of clubwomen.

The magazine for which Prof. A. Clark of Stanford designed the cover "set forth facts, features and figures" relative to the county. The Board of Supervisors of Santa Clara County gave a check for \$150 for 1,000 copies. The Chamber of Commerce also purchased a great number and calls for the publication came from many places. The club netted \$1,500 from sales. The 5,000 copies made their appearance on January 16, 1911 on a day heralded by the club as "Magazine Day". A large attendance of clubwomen and townspeople attended and speeches of celebration were made by committee members who were: Mesdames Gilbert, Stuart, Place, Scofield, Lakin, Parkinson, Elliot and Greene.

The Chamber of Commerce found the publication "invaluable" and the local newspapers praised it editorially. High tribute was especially paid to President Karns for her untiring efforts in leading the club women to great success in this unique project, proceeds of which will be given to the Club's building fund.

Suffragists In Club Organize: In 1911 many prominent members of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto were still ardent suffragists and some assisted in the organization of the Independent Equality Suffrage League which was launched February 2 with Mrs. Karns as its first president.

The membership list reads in part like a club roster, names of some of the husbands of club members are also shown. The league, however, had no connection with the club and quoting from its record book it was "not connected with any other suffrage organization."

It was not so long after the organization of this group that California women were given the franchise, and were given rousing cheers and applause for this vote achievement by clubwomen from all over the country in attendance at the convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in San Francisco. It was not until 1920 that national suffrage was achieved.

Season of 1912 - 1913: Mrs. Buchan, retiring president was toastmistress at the Founders Day luncheon held Mat 28 at Hotel Palo Alto. Reminiscing toasts and talks were given by old club members. Mrs. Kate Kellogg Hutchinson (Mrs. Joseph Hutchinson), a charter member, spoke as the oldest past president and Mrs. A. P. Zschokke, a charter member as one of the oldest residents.

Season of 1914 - 1915: Mrs. Charlotte Dingley's second year, 1914 - 1915 as president was marked by the same diligence shown the previous year. It was "a year devoted almost entirely to doing for others - "a new kind of success" according to the recording secretary, Mrs. Marguerite K. Swearingin in her yearly report. She gives great credit to the president for her alertness and generosity in all activities. Mrs. Dingley, an accomplished pianist, was frequently called upon through the years she served in offices and as an interested club member to be accompanist or soloist and, regardless of her duties, she responded graciously.

The building of the clubhouse was in the minds of all but increasing the fund was not stressed early in the year owing to the European war, but the club lot was leveled by the Federal Construction Co., by order of the city engineer with no expense to the club.

Payments to the Belgian relief fund were voted upon at a called meeting Nov. 9 and a decision to give \$60 - to be paid in monthly installments - was increased to \$100 with subscriptions by club members.

The club had a fruit booth in the Belgian Relief European Market Benefit given in March. Financial aid was given to the Travelers' Aid Society in monthly payments. The Christmas Cheer committee assisted 14 families. The Henry W. Longfellow Ass'n., for the preservation of the poet's birthplace, was also given financial assistance.

One of our former presidents, Mrs. E. G. Greene, was very active in her state office as chairman of the Department of Water for the state federation and the club endorsed a number of important natural resources movements, called to their attention by Mrs. Greene. They also endorsed the Conservation in our public schools after an appeal from the State Superintendent of Schools.

At one of the early meetings, Mrs. Emily Karns, local program chairman of the Woman's Board of the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, presided and presented speakers on this subject. Mrs. Ethel Ostrander Boyd gave a song much favor at that time - "I Love You, California."

For Santa Clara Day at the Exposition in San Francisco, the club assisted the San Jose committee in sending flowers and automobiles and hostessing at the booth.

Miss Maude J. Wilson, a club art leader spoke at a regular meeting on "Cubist-Futurist-Post Impressionist". Another art interest was the series of art talks given by Mrs. W. A. (Jennie) Cannon at her home, 1727 Waverly Street, proceeds going to the Belgian Relief Fund.

Mrs. Emily Karns, who attended the General Federation meeting in Chicago reported on that interesting convention and Mrs. Rodgers sang the Federation song, "America the Beautiful".

Founders Day was celebrated with a luncheon at Masonic Temple with Mrs. Karns as chairman and Mrs. Dingley as toastmistress. The program was "Auld Lang Syne" by Mrs. John Parkinson, "Our Clubhouse" by Mrs. Charles Morrison, "Gospel of Play" by Mrs. Charles H. Gilbert, "The Woman Movement" by Mrs. C. A. Barker, "Our New President" by Mrs. M. A. Buchan, an original "Poem" written by Mrs. Louise Culver's mother, Mrs. Minnie Bliss Culver, a charter member and our second club president. A club prophesy was given by Mrs. Stuart, Mrs. Dingley installed the new President, Mrs. Adelaide M. Coburn and the Vice President Mrs. Anna LaPiere. Charter members present were Mrs. John F. Parkinson, a past president, Mrs. A. L. Corbert, Mrs. Anna P. Zschokke, Mrs. House and Mrs. G. W. Holly. The dominant note struck through the afternoon was the call for the erection in the near future of a new clubhouse.

Source of an "Annals of the Past" item in the Bulletin:

From the minutes of the Club, July 30, 1915: "A called meeting of the Woman's Club was held at the home of Mrs. Wilson, the object of said meeting being to consider the endorsement of resolutions making an appeal to the County supervisors for the improvement of the County Jail at San Jose. The resolution was read and discussed. The motion that the club endorse these resolutions was made by Mrs. Dingley and carried. Motion that our President Mrs. Coburn be a delegate to appear with Mrs. Huff before the supervisors, made by Mrs. Karns, carried."

Following this up:

Executive Board Meeting – October 4, 1915: Meeting held at the home of Mrs. LaPeire called to order by the president Mrs. A. M. Coburn. Mrs. Coburn gave a brief report of her visit before the Board of Supervisors in connection with representatives from other clubs regarding the condition of the County jail in San Jose. "Meeting not encouraging."

Season of 1924 – 1925: In the season of 1924 – 1925 community service was foremost in the club's work. Financial assistance for Yule trees and children's books at the library was given. Club members acted as hostesses at the Community House and served at the city's May Day Fete. Money was contributed to the Veteran's Hospital for Christmas gifts and a piano. The club sponsored the Girl Scouts and was represented on the Girl Scout council. Service of two club members on the Chamber of Commerce park committee and maintenance of a membership in that organization. Sponsoring of Better Homes Week. Mrs. F. Frink, in her second year of office, was president.

Season of 1930 – 1931: "Introducing a new note into its activities", the club gave an all-club-talent Jinx at the second meeting in January, written and directed by Mrs. Cecile Berry.

As a preface, departmental heads were presented by the president Mrs. N. E. Malcolm and each responded with a quotation relative to the department represented; closing with the drama chairman who gave a Jinx prologue in original verse. Ten acts were given. "Styles of Yesteryear" were dramatically presented, some of which were, "The Motor Girl" by Mrs. H. B. Spaulding, "The Bicycle Girl" by Mrs. Jeanne L. Gibson and the "Main Street Girls" by Mrs. Alfred Engle and Mrs. E. F. Weishaar.

Costumed in Dutch style, wearing wooden shoes and carrying Blind-craft brooms which they later sold in the audience, were Mesdames Prior, Lakin, Zink, Button, Ross and Miss Eileen Tinney. Mrs. I. P. Vandervoort, gave a song and dance number.

A Musical Revue in which Mrs. Prentiss Deering, attired as a Broadway bachelor, led a chorus, had as its participants, Mesdames de Lemos, Davidson, Atwood, Neel, Corwin and Miss Olivia Wedel. Miss Laura Lee was piano accompanist.

There was a humorous moonlight serenade act with "young men" playing mandolins and guitars. Among the individual skits was a characterization of Harry Lauder by kilt-attired Mrs. Ross and Italian character sketches by the drama chairman. Closing the show was a black face act of chorus and solo work and introduction of Mrs. Berry's song, "Dreamin' in the Twilight" by Mrs. Earl Clark with banjo accompaniment.

Season of 1939 – 1940: The year 1939 – 1940 had Mrs. Henry Gemmer as president and Mrs. Henry L. Oberg (Grace) as vice president and program chairman.

1930 – 1951 History

At the first regular meeting, club members heard something of the workings of the mind of Germany's Adolph Hitler by a Current Events review of his Mein Kampf (My Battle) given by Marea Lambert Gally, a Study Group chairman and Miss Margaret Fallenius, director of the newly organized choral, "Treble Clef", gave violin solos.

For the Christmas entertainment, Dr. William Hawley Davis, of Stanford, gave a reading from A Christmas Carol by Dickens. The "Treble Clef" group, assisted by a number of children in authentically fashioned costumes like those of the women of that period, gave a stage presentation of strolling Christmas carolers. Miss Fallenius was assisted in stage work by Mrs. Stanley Cronquest and Mrs. Oberg.

Following a custom of many years, clubwomen brought jellies and canned fruit for distribution by the Palo Alto Benevolence Association.

The excellent spring fashion show was under the direction of Mrs. Charles O. Taylor.

(N.B: President Barnard also wrote a compilation of every item in the Minutes which related to the Gymnasium issue. These are in the Club Archives.)

WC talk for April PAA program, 1950s

1950 – 1951 History

Palo Alto and the Women's Club were both enjoying boom times in the post World War II era. In transcribing the minutes for the 1950-

1951 club year, I was astonished to see new members coming in at

the rate of about six per month, and resigning at the rate of about

one per month. There was not a single month without new members

welcomed and no two months were identical. To take one example,

in October, eleven new members joined, five previous members

resigned. Since so many women were clamoring to join, the club

decided to accept all approved applications and to remove its 300

member limit, a limit that is now, 54 years later, 225, the number

the fire department says can safely fit into the ballroom.

So why would so many women want to join the club?

To get a perspective on this influx of members, I checked census

records and found an answer. The population of Palo Alto more than

doubled in that decade, from 25,475 in 1950 to 51,287 in 1960. The

Women's Club was a ready-made channel for women new to the

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To get a perspective on this influx of members, I checked census records and found an answer. The population of Palo Alto more than doubled in that decade, from 25,475 in 1950 to 52,287 in 1960. The Women's Club was a ready-made channel for women new to the community to acquire friends, participate in social and educational

events, and find opportunities for civic activism in dozens of projects and programs.

I know two persons who are now members who came to live in California because of wartime duties. For our oral histories, I interviewed Boots Gould, who was president in 1988-89 and again from 1992 -94. Her husband went back to Michigan to get her after World War II when he had returned from duty in the Pacific. When they arrived in their car on the peninsula, with all their possessions, they stopped to ask several people if they knew the way to San Josie. Everyone said no, they had never heard of San Josie.

I think that some of the cultural attitudes I perceive in the minutes derived somewhat from World War II. Every month of 1950-51, the club had its Board Meeting and what they called the Regular Meeting, that the entire membership was invited to. The minutes of the Regular Meetings go into detail about the formal Tea, with a capital T, often describing the flowers and the beautiful tablecloth, such as one that was a century old, lent for the occasion by a

member. Every month, the secretary recorded the full names of who "poured." Once, six women, each fully named, such as Mrs. John F. Duckworth and Mrs. J. Harold McFall, "poured" at three exquisite tea tables.

These careful descriptions reminded me of the depression, when most people had to concentrate on putting any food on the table. It must have been a relief for those same people to be uppity about dainty food and presentation. I thought too about how we had been England's ally, a country with a reputation then for formality, a serious class system, and afternoon tea. I went to a couple of teas when I was in high school during the war. Our mothers instructed us to wear our best afternoon ensembles that would have been deficient without stockings, heels, hat, and gloves. The formality at the Woman's Club was such that the President and the board at the annual meeting formed a line to receive guests in the foyer, rather like a wedding reception or a White House shindig. By the next year, 1951-52, the new board, perceiving perhaps that the club was overdoing the elite appeal, cut the tea mode to only special

occasions and replaced it with a coffee hour or punch, non-alcoholic of course.

The end of the war also ended well-paying jobs for many women. It was unpatriotic for a woman to hold a job because men had risked their lives and the least we could do was to return them to the workforce. A habit that seemed to emphasize women's subordination was the use of married women's husband's names. In all the minutes the 1950-51 secretary mentioned the President three or four times for each meeting, with her full name each time--Mrs. James G. Marshall. It seemed an additional sign of deference that the secretary even used middle initials of husbands' in most cases.

Many women needed an outlet for their energy, and there was plenty to do to rebuild a country that had put aside community needs to wage war. An article in the most recent Pacific Historical Review mentions that early women's clubs' tradition was one of "altruistic reform..." by which the author meant that the women donated their

services and in the political realm, they attempted to improve their communities indirectly instead of by running for office. Something a speaker said at a Palo Alto Women's Club meeting in 1950 indicates that women still then thought of their individual clubs, and their federations of clubs, as a power base separate from politics:

She said that 1,000 women can be helpful, 10,000 can be forceful, 100,000 can be powerful, and 5,000,000 women can be invincible.

Early in the century the philosophy of exerting pressure for civic improvement was an adaptation for women who did not gain the right to vote in California until 1911 or in the nation until 1920,

That philosophy also fit the post war period when women were expected to retreat from gainful employment and that included not being professional politicians.

options available to club members to join Sections: Bridge, Book,

"Altruistic reform" shows up in the 1950s in the Women's Club of Palo Alto in two ways: One by the large number of causes the women worked on through the club, and by monetary donations made by the club itself. In a time when the annual club dues were \$8.00, and \$2.00 was the cost of the club's membership in the Save

the Redwoods League, the club donated \$10 monthly, countless volunteer hours, and the proceeds of a fund raising event to the Veterans' Hospital. Another big donation was \$124 for Girl Scout Camperships. The club's annual budget was \$5,000, 10% of which was spent for donations. The Red Cross was another major recipient of club largesse. In 1951 the club donated its building for the Red Cross to hold nine consecutive weekly first aid training sessions. Two women were mentioned as being unable to handle their club responsibilities because they had been "called for service" by the Red Cross.

At the end of her term as president, Mrs. James G, Marshall, said the motto that year had been "Fun in '51." Here are some of the options available to club members to join Sections: Bridge, Book, Music and Drama, Garden, Art, Choral Group, Veterans' Hospital, Junior Woman's Club, International Relations, Civic and Community Contact, in addition to the County, State, and National Federations of Women's Clubs, all of which had sections, committees, regular meetings, and annual conventions. Three Palo

Altans attended the national federation's convention in Boston.

Paintings by members of the art section, many of which won prizes at various federation competitions, now grace the walls of the clubhouse, and often the club house was used by other art or hobby groups for their exhibits. Here is a painting by _____, one of _____ that are now part of the décor at the club house.

The Garden Section's January meeting in 1951 was about the Beautification of Palo Alto. When Mrs. Lyndon Johnson used that word, I thought she had invented it.

I suspect that the number 1950 reminds people of anniversaries, and anniversaries remind them of history. Mrs. Van Loh, custodian of records, reported that all record books had been labeled and asked for permission to purchase a file for \$2.50 for them, that Mrs. Cecil Berry had for several years been compiling the club's early history, and that she, Mrs. Van Loh, would deliver in person the club's \$25 donation to the Palo Alto Historical Association. The photograph on the screen was ^{part} of our display one month in the Palo Alto Main library, as evidence that we are telling our history, even though we

have not actually compiled a history. We do put a brief history article in the club's monthly newsletter, and the Palo Alto Historical Association is on the mailing list for that newsletter.

History of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, 1894-1952

Other indications that women in the club in the 1950s were thinking about history. In the first years, planting trees along streets was a club project. In 1950, Mrs. Spitzer designed "Tree Markers" that she proposed to place at "notable and historical trees of Palo Alto." The club voted to pay for the complete project.

Another item that showed their care for history was their purchase for \$265 of a fireproof cabinet for club records, which we still use. The history committee knows much of what we are telling you today because of that expense and by the attention to history by our club ancestors.

History of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, 1894-1952

The Palo Alto Community Notebook, 1952

History of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, 1894-1952

From The Alto Community Notebook, 1952

PALO ALTO WOMAN'S CLUB

Almost from the beginning of the community to present-day bustling Palo Alto, the Woman's Club has played a key role in the cultural, social and civic growth of our city. Its origin goes back to 1893, months before the organization meeting of June 24, 1894, according to former Club secretary Mrs. F. A. Stuart, who recalled how Mrs. Anna Paddock Wing led a series of "mothers' meetings" and conceived the idea of engaging in broader work. Then a little notice in June 8th Palo Alto Times announced:

"All interested in the organization of a Palo Alto Woman's Club will meet June 13, at 3 p. m. at the Presbyterian Church."

But the organizational meeting was postponed to June 20th when Mary G. Campbell, former member of the Chicago Women's Club, was invited to be acting chairman while Mrs. A. P. Zschokke served as secretary. Some 24 women signed the constitution as charter members that day and elected Mrs. Campbell president, an office she capably filled for four and a half years. She is remembered as an able parliamentarian, a versatile speaker and experienced club member and traveler, her personality and sense of organization giving the club a favorable start. These qualities were quickly reflected in her acceptance in "congratulating Palo Alto upon being no longer a sort of orphan but now having both city fathers and mothers, thus insuring a prosperous future, a nourishing of its spiritual and refining issues, as well as its material welfare."

Four Departments

The Club's functions, as stated in its constitution, included four departments: home and household economics, education and science, philanthropy, and art and literature. Its objects were affirmed as self-improvement, mutual help and community work. The Club was affiliated with the State Federation and the General Federation in 1898, was incorporated in 1904 and affiliated with the County Federation in 1920.

Early talks by guest speakers featuring Club programs were of a practical nature, such as Children's Rights, and the tramp problem ("friendly woodyard"). The Club's reputation mounted steadily through talks and musical programs, not the least of them being Dr. Jordan's remarks on "The Increasing Demand for the Fool Killer," Prof. E. A. Ross' address on "The Woman Question" and Prof. A. B. Clark's discussion on domestic architecture. The Club agitated in earnest for civic betterment from the first by proposing that the town trustees place a sewer bond issue before the voters. By 1896, the Club was not lacking in influence since the membership had already exceeded 100. Establishment of the Palo Alto Public Library

was the Club's finest achievement, a goal attained through book socials and a series of authors' teas. One of these, for example, was held at the John Casper Branner home where Mrs. David Starr Jordan read from Stevenson and the Stanford Girls' Glee Club in their "white duck uniforms" sang.

Besides stimulating an early circulating library, the Club concerned itself with planning a city park, street beautification and tree planting and protesting a proposed saloon at the city's edge. In April, 1904, the Club endorsed Mrs. C. L. Place as a candidate for school trustee. Her election made her the first woman to hold public office in Palo Alto. Also on the citizens' committee of 50 studying the prospective city charter of 1909 were four representatives of the Woman's Club.

Autumn Festivals

From the Woman's Club and the church groups stemmed most of the community's early social life, much of it centering at the old Presbyterian Church. The Autumn festivals developed by the Club in 1907 and 1908 were vivid experiences in the life of our community when it was small. Coming on the heels of the big earthquake in 1906, it contributed materially to local morale and made outsiders more aware of the town. Mrs. Edith Bushnell was in charge of the two-day program which began on a Friday afternoon with a street fair and carnival and parade followed by an auto obstacle race down University Avenue for \$10 first prize. Then came the Stanford Field program replete with balloon ascension, pony races for kids and the broncho riding and wild west exhibition. Evening gaiety began with a "grand illumination" of the city as Stanford students paraded with the college band at their head. The lively night activities included student circuses, Side shows, merry-go-round, Dad Moulton's dog circus and the special festival program in the skating rink where Mayor J. F. Parkinson keynoted the occasion.

Gala Skating Rink

The outdoor Stanford Band concert had its counterpart in the brightly decorated skating rink festooned in white, yellow and green above and numerous lights (before neon)—where an overture and musical selections were played by the Stanford orchestra plus songs by the Stanford glee and mandolin clubs. Miss Mary Herdman's girl dancers presented a scarf drill and the whole rink assemblage was enlivened with a grand march past the booth-lined walls and up to the stage. Outside, Town Marshall E. F. Weisshaar kept a wary eye peeled for "all suspicious characters." Saturday's celebration included a grand horse parade down University Avenue and continued daring events at Stanford Field plus afternoon baloon lift and fancy riding events. College undergraduates cut loose with a second night parade led by their snazzy Weiner-Wurst Oompah brass band. Side Shows, a 65-foot flame dive

and more music by the Palo Alto City Band entertained the crowds. Spectators in the skating rink were entertained by the Boys' Cadet Band, acrobatics by Stanford gymnasts and heard a talk by Senator Marshall Black and an address by Dr. Jordan. When the festival was held in 1908 with art and craft exhibits under Mrs. O. L. Elliott and Mrs. Edith Bushnell, much interest centered on Mrs. A. M. Anthony's country store at Jordan's Hall. A gag post office and a big amusements tent rigged at Bryant and University contributed to what the press then reported as a "pandemonium of pleasure."

500 Attend Housewarming

Through the years Club members steadfastly prevailed over disappointments along with the successes and pleasures enjoyed. Even the \$800 assumed debt, left in the lap of the Woman's Club after the closing of a gymnasium above Peter Mullen's shop, deferred but did not thwart the realization of a clubhouse building. Club members worked the harder, raised funds, saved and paid bills and so established the preeminence of integrity at a time when a young community needed the example of high character. Finally on June 10, 1916, ground was broken for the clubhouse which had its housewarming September 23, as a crowd of nearly 500 well-wishers inspected the \$5,300 building and heard Judge Egerton D. Lakin's speech. The large assembly room has been made available to many organizations in the past 36 years, including use by a number of new church groups.

Not only had the Woman's Club been concerned in sewage problems, promoted milk inspection, cared for the sick in the serious typhoid epidemic of 1903, helped in earthquake relief in 1906, co-operated in the social welfare of trainees at Camp Fremont at Menlo Park in World War I, but in later years members interested themselves in the welfare of servicemen at the nearby U. S. Veterans' Hospital. The Club pioneered many beneficial things for the community. It encouraged school garden-making long before the advent of World War I "victory gardens," supplied street rubbish disposal cans, and provided a lunch and rest room for girls at the high school. Mrs. Mary F. Lakin, one of the Club's "pioneer mothers," often toured University Avenue with her buggy loaded down with watering cans to keep the saplings alive, an interest in trees which the Club still fosters.

Entertain Service Men

Parties for service men were given in the spring of 1943 by the Woman's Club at Hospitality House and the Page Mill Camp. It had also sponsored the Palo Alto Junior Woman's Club which was organized in 1941-'42. The Club now has over 300 members and a \$6,000 annual budget. This has been reflected in the Club's assistance to the Junior Museum, the Community Youth Fund, the Youth Talent Fund, Y. W. C. A., the Humane Society and

the Student Nurses' Scholarship Fund. It gave strong support to the 1950 city charter. The Club's Village Improvement Department, concerned in the 1909 charter and many city needs, was succeeded in 1907 by the Civic Department which remains vigilant for community welfare.

Presidents of the Palo Alto Woman's Club in its 58-year history have included Mrs. Mary G. Campbell, Mrs. K. K. Hutchinson, Mrs. M. B. Culver, Mrs. S. A. Dyer, Mrs. H. M. Parkinson, Mrs. C. H. Gilbert, Mrs. J. S. Lakin, Mrs. F. A. Stuart, Mrs. E. G. Greene, Mrs. E. S. Karns, Mrs. M. A. Buchan, Mrs. C. G. Dingley, Mrs. M. A. Coburn, Mrs. C. T. Morrison, Mrs. J. T. Hubbard, Mrs. J. W. Mansfield, Mrs. Lela Bentley, Mrs. R. L. Cody, Mrs. F. G. Frink, Mrs. Ernest Wilson, Mrs. C. H. Barnard, Mrs. N. E. Malcolm, Mrs. Tom Ashlock, Mrs. Andrew Hansen, Mrs. Ernest Alwyn, Mrs. Ernest Morey, Mrs. Henry Carmean, Mrs. A. B. Mayhew, Mrs. A. J. Hill, Mrs. Henry Gemmer, Mrs. J. P. Baumberger, Mrs. Clement H. Arnold, Mrs. Howard A. Zink, Mrs. Harry P. Davis, Mrs. Carl W. Watts, Mrs. George H. Casaday, Mrs. George E. Radford, Mrs. J. Harold McFall, Mrs. T. O. Dowdell, Mrs. James G. Marshall, Mrs. Albert K. Spielberger and Mrs. Albert D. Bonell as present head of the Club.

JUNIOR WOMEN'S CLUB

The Junior Women's Club was organized through the efforts of Mrs. Clement H. Arnold in June, 1941, during her term as president of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto. She has served as the younger Club's advisor in the dozen years since its founding when the Club began with just 12 members. During and since that first year of Miss Marjorie Smith's presidency youth conservation work stands out as the "functioning purpose" of this lively club. It is one of the 150 clubs belonging to the California State Federation of Women's Clubs with junior membership. By-laws of this woman's service club state its purpose to be "to unite members on a service program along lines of social, philanthropic, educational and civic interest."

During Mrs. William Rushworth's presidency in 1946-47, the Club pioneered a play-school for youngsters in the basement of the First Methodist Church, a project later taken over by the School Board and transferred to Lytton School. This activity by the Club, plus their unique leadership in the community's successful effort in establishing the Family Service Association brought state-wide recognition for distinguished civic service in the award of the Josephine Seaman Civic Award of Merit.

Untiring devotion of the Club's 73 members has produced a notable record of 4,000 hours of volunteer work at the Veterans' Administration Hospital in ward parties and physical therapy. The Club displayed much initiative in helping petitions seeking action in curbing accidents on "bloody Bayshore" and started booths in the concerted effort to hasten state action for a freeway.

Woman's Club of Palo Alto History From 1894-1975

by

Mrs. Phil Bodley

Historian 1975

President 1971-1972, 1980-1981

Notice - Preliminary President Date - 1894-1896

On the afternoon of June 14th, 1894, twenty Palo Alto women turned up like
swirls
Church, on the corner of University and University Avenue.

Woman's Club of Palo Alto History From 1894-1975

Eager to form a Woman's Club United by common needs, their purpose stern
and solemn, they were set on being practical. The ladies were true characters in
the History of Palo Alto.

by

At once the work began. There was no high school for the boys and girls, and the
women of the Club wanted education for their children. The school trustees
could and would pay for a teacher, but there was no house for a high school.
Mrs. Zachoske, of the Woman's Club, took a room in back of her home for
boys and girls who were in the morning in the warm,
yellow fields, to take up

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Even as the ladies were busy in other fields, the Club had
no dues, but undaunted by their lack of funds, they organized a book room.
They collected 100 books and opened a downtown reading room. At first the
ladies took turns as librarians - taking their children with them. They spent the
day in the room, giving out books to hungry readers and giving lunch to their
hungry children. For five years, from 1896 to 1901, the Woman's Club ran the
library. In that time it grew out of its room, into a house. Each the ladies raised
money to pay a librarian. In 1901, the library became a City Institute. Four years
later, through an Andrew Carnegie donation of \$10,000, the library that we know
was built.

At the same time the women were busy in other fields. The Village Improvement
Committee, part of the Club, bought, and planted trees, small Magnolias on
University Avenue, and the ladies, assisted by their husbands, went in their
buggies, buckets in their hands, and watered the trees. So they brought their
dreams to life.

Woman's Club of Palo Alto History From 1894-1975

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Mrs. Phil Bodley

Historian 1975

President 1971-1972, 1980-1981

Notice – Preliminary President date – 1893-1896.

On the afternoon of June 14th, 1894, twenty Palo Alto women kicked up little swirls of dust along the village paths, as they hurried to the old Presbyterian Church, on the corner of Waverly and University Avenue.

Eager to form a Woman's Club; United by common needs, their purpose stern and solemn, they were set on being practical. The ladies were true characters in the History of Palo Alto.

At once the work began. There was no high school for the boys and girls, and the women of the Club wanted education for their children. The school trustees could and would pay for a teacher, but there was no house for a high school. Mrs. Zschokke, of the Woman's Club built a small house in back of her home for boys and girls who were brought in from their carefree roaming in the warm, yellow fields, to take up learning.

Even as the ladies worked on the school, they dreamed of a library. The Club had no dues; but undaunted by their lack of funds, they organized a book social. They collected 100 books and opened a downtown reading room. At first the ladies took turns as librarian – taking their children with them. They spent the day in the room, giving out books to hungry readers and giving lunch to their hungry children. For five years, from 1896 to 1901, the Woman's Club ran the library. In that time it grew out of its room, into a house. Then the ladies raised money to pay a librarian. In 1901, the library became a City institute. Four years later, through an Andrew Carnegie donation of \$10,000, the library that we know was built.

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In the Spring of 1903, an epidemic of typhoid struck the town. The ladies provided food for the victims, carrying it to the improvised hospital where they lay. In 1904, the Club was incorporated, and the dream of a Clubhouse began to take concrete form in the development of a lot fund. A short time later the lot was purchased, although misgivings were great because the corner at Homer and Cowper was so far out of town. On April 18th, 1906, the secretary wrote in the book of minutes "Today we had no meeting because of great shock of earthquake. Shock occurred at 5:13 A. M. Scarcely a house stands undamaged in all of Palo Alto. We are helping refugees from San Francisco." Two weeks later the regular meeting of the Woman's Club was held.

The ladies went on with their business. Now they were in full battle, fighting toward the building of the Clubhouse. To this end, in 1910, they published a book "The Santa Clara Valley". Five thousand copies were printed and sold. The proceeds \$1,500.00 went into the building fund. Sponsored by the Woman's Club, Helen Keller came to town and spoke to a crowd that filled the largest hall in Palo Alto and the proceeds went into the building fund. Encouraged by their first publishing venture, the Club ladies compiled a cookbook, filled with cherished recipes which they published and sold and the proceeds went into the building fund. Costume parties, receptions, and food markets were held; every means was used to raise an honest penny. At last the day arrived - on September 22nd, 1916, The Palo Alto Woman's Club opened the Clubhouse! In less than a year the Country was at war. The Woman's Club was besieged by the demands of the Nation, thus setting aside their personal projects. All effort went into War work.

They bought bonds, they entertained for the soldiers at Camp Fremont, they worked at the Base hospital and they worked for the Red Cross. Peace came... The war was won. The Woman's Club returned to its normal activities. The advent of Women's Suffrage extended their interest in legislation. The little village of Palo Alto grew into a City. Along University Avenue, the magnolia trees blossomed. Today in 1975 as we look at the beautiful magnolia trees, let us remember that the Woman's Club dedicated women helped to plant them. Women began to take their place in business; Contract bridge made its debut; new organizations came to town; the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, the Business Women's Club, the beautiful Community Center and many other groups received help from the Woman's Club. The economic depression spread over the nation, but the Woman's Club rode out the storm and kept the Clubhouse going.

True to their original plan, they were practical. With other Women's Clubs, they worked for reform legislation: Tuberculin Tests for Dairy Cattle; Joint Guardianship for children; Health Certificates for Marriage; Community Property Rights for Married Women; and the preservation of the Redwoods. All These they achieved.

Through the 1930's, parties, plays and dances were held in the clubhouse. Each year the Woman's Club responded, working and playing, too... Until Pearl Harbor and World War II, which presented the Woman's Club with a long list of demands. Once again the ladies gave long hours of work to the Red Cross; once again they undertook to provide entertainment for the men in the Service of Uncle Sam: once again the needs of the army hospital were answered... they furnished a sun room, they found musical instruments for the boys to have at hand for their amusement when the boys returned from battle.

In 1944 the Club celebrated our 50th anniversary with a Pageant recalling the bygone days bringing back happy memories. A Fashion Parade was put on by the members. Entertainment of music, dancing and singing made this anniversary an outstanding success.

May 28, 1969 the Club celebrated our 75th anniversary, our "Diamond Jubilee" celebration which was a Country Store Fair, a box social and entertainment. The Club netted \$875.00.

The Club has Life Membership in the Palo Alto Historical Society. In 1972, the president of the Woman's Club was appointed by Mayor Kirke W. Comstock to the Citizen's Committee to acquire the Squire House. The Woman's Club was among other organizations to endorse the preservation of the Squire House. The Club and members donated money to purchase it. It was built in 1904. Dedication was January 27, 1973.

In 1952 the Woman's Club of Palo Alto was awarded a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond by the Women's Home Companion. This was the result of a nation-wide competition to determine how effective women working together might be able to build better communities. After 3 long years, Nellie Broderson, legislation chairman for many years for the Woman's Club, was able to enlist the interest and enthusiasm of groups in the entire county in securing a new Santa Clara County Jail, a new juvenile home, a county hospital and to ban pari-mutual racing.

Also in 1952 the Club established a \$300 scholarship for a student graduating from one of the three Senior High Schools of Palo Alto on a rotating basis. We are still giving this scholarship in 1975. An Indian scholarship is given each year in the amount of \$100.

The Junior Women's Club was organized in June 1941. It is no longer in existence in 1975.

A member of the Club, Marguerite Fenney, composer, pianist wrote three songs that were sung on numerous occasions. The Club assisted the District in its endeavor to establish the Congressional Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge, Pa. The Woman's Club of Palo Alto's name was inscribed in a high place of honor, the archives building at Valley Forge, the area set aside by Federation to honor Congressional Medal of Honor recipients. Mrs. Fenney wrote the hymn "For God and Country" in honor of recipients of the Medal of Honor. All money received by her for her efforts in musical endeavors was returned to the Club for the restoration of the Mission Bells along El Camino Real, thus the Club sent funds to the District to restore two Mission Bells, a state project. Mrs. Fenney wrote a truly authentic story of the Missions in the song "The Mission Bells of California." She also wrote "Song of Palo Alto" which has and is being used in many organizations in Palo Alto.

During the many years (59 years) the Club members have been busy keeping up the beautiful Clubhouse. In one year, I read in the minutes that they spent over \$10,000 for repairs. In 1973 we noticed the wall bulging out. What happened was that over the years several roofs had been put on (one over the other) and caused the rafters to break and thus the wall was collapsing. We spent \$30,000 to make repairs; new rafters, new roof (but this time the new roof was not put on top of the old ones!) New fixtures were installed and in 1970 we had new draperies.

Rentals are a source of income to meet the taxes, expenses and upkeep. However, the Club has rummage sales, card parties, fashion shows, dinners, box social, book sales, bazaars, art shows, luncheons, sold cook books and recipes, but one of the easiest ways to make money is to sell ads for the yearbook. In 1972 we sold \$1,650.00 worth of ads.

The Club has won many awards each year from Loma Prieta District. Music, Drama, and Art are enjoyed in the Club's activities. Bridge is one of the very

enjoyable pastimes for the women, and the money they make is turned into the Club. Many bus trips were planned for members' enjoyment.

In 1965 the Club took in 45 new members and, in 1972, 37 members. The membership in 1975 is 165. Each year we take in many members, but those two years were the largest number since we started the Club. The Woman's Club continues its interest in community affairs, its projects too numerous to enumerate.

The forgoing short history was gleaned from Minutes of the first 81 years and additional highlights bring the history up to date (1994).

The first Club meeting was held December 5, 1894 and Professor Pearce of Stanford University spoke on the question of what women should do and have, or not do and have, involving their civil, social, Political and moral rights. He said, "one of the primary rights of women is the right not marry. It used to be the case that to marry was the only way for a woman to earn her living. But if she has the right not to marry, unless she wants to, she must also have the right to earn a living...to enter industry. This involves a right to fit herself for her work, to enter Universities and professional schools, to be measured by the same standard as men and to receive equal pay for equal work". And women are still trying to get equal pay for equal work in 1996.

December 2, 1904, the Clubhouse lot was purchased for \$1,125.00. May 12, 1908, there were 150 members in the Club and only \$20.00 in the treasury. February 9, 1913 the dues were raised to \$2.00, initiation fee \$1.00.

Through the years Club members steadfastly prevailed over disappointments along with successes and pleasures enjoyed. Even the \$800.00 debt left in the lap of the Woman's Club after closing of a gymnasium, deferred but did not thwart the realization of a clubhouse building. Some of the members donated as much as \$10.00 per month to pay the bad debt. Club members worked hard to raise funds to pay bills and to save money for a home of their own - a Clubhouse. Finally on June 10, 1916, ground was broken for the Clubhouse which had its housewarming September 23, 1916, as a crowd of nearly 500 well-wishers inspected the \$5,300 building and heard Judge Lakin's speech. September 20, 1916 was their first regular meeting in the new Clubhouse and there were expressions of pride and joy for having a "Home of their Own". Members felt it was a glorious victory!

A scholarship has been awarded each year to a College bound young lady, one year to a young man studying law enforcement.

Our work has continued with the Veteran's Hospital. We have supported "The Haven" which is open to all patients interested in food and conversation for all.

Some of our members served on the ad-hoc committee with the intent of setting up what we now know as the "Senior Center" on Bryant Street. Some went on to aid in setting up 19 such Centers in Santa Clara County. It is said that the Club supported the formation of the Auxiliary. A dream come true and some of our ladies still volunteer there, others take advantage of the services offered at the "Senior Center".

The earthquake of 1989 saw us mobilize with blankets, cots, baby formula, and clothing and food for 100. Plus a check to the Red Cross for \$2,000.00. First load went down to Hollister in three days. Second followed in a week to Watsonville.

More recently we supported Little League Baseball to the extent of several hundred dollars for uniforms.

A program concerning child abuse and battered women brought forth donations of cash plus 150 items of clothing, including maternity. Also collected was bedding for the Homeless Center.

We have kept faith with those founding members and also with the city of Palo Alto these past 103 years and look forward to fulfilling the purpose of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto which is self-improvement, fellowship and community work.

The Juniors 1941 - 1980s

THE FORTIES

In March, 1941, a group of young thirteen young women affiliated with the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, founded the Palo Alto Junior Woman's Club. One of the leading figures in the founding was Mrs. Clement Arnold, then president of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, who saw the need for a club where young women would be in charge of one woman's club function per year and be allowed to meet in the Club House on the second Tuesday of every month. The Juniors quickly established a connection with the district federation. Their by-laws committed them to be involved in local civic, philanthropic, educational, and social activities. In the fall of 1941, they selected the chrysanthemum as their club flower and device.

by

I pledge my loyalty to the Junior Clubwomen,
By doing better than ever before what work I have to do;
By being prompt, honest, courteous, and helpful;
Trying to accomplish something.

Peggy McKee

History Committee, 1997-2017

By the middle of the 1940s, they had established a routine of bi-monthly meetings (second and fourth Tuesday evenings) with one session devoted to business and the other to sewing. The "girls" as they originally called themselves, held one business meeting and one social event each month.

The Juniors hit the ground running in the summer of 1941, by entertaining and then holding a barbecue for twenty-five soldiers stationed at Moffett Field. They raised money through their dues and activities such as bake sales, bazaar, rummage sales, raffles, clothing drives, concerts, card parties, dinner parties (one spaghetti dinner event charged 55 cents,) dances, amateur theatricals, and the like. They donated money to provide a new chesterfield sofa for the AWVS (American Women's Voluntary Services) lounge; they baked cookies for soldiers and created "Santa Packages" for them at Dibble Hospital; they made a cash gift to The American Red Cross both for recordings and a new phonograph. They also served as hostesses at Palo Alto's Hospitality House.

After the war, the Juniors continued their civic, philanthropic, educational, and social commitments. *The Palo Alto News* chronicled their busy schedule of events and fund-raising, which supported the arts and especially programs for children. They continued to hold dances, bazaar, raffles, etc. donating funds to local libraries, play activities for pre-school children, the Youth Conservation League, the Palo Alto Youth Council, the Teen Center, the Morning Glory School for the Blind, the San Mateo Blood Bank, the Family Service Association. In addition, they invited prominent women to speak at their meetings, entertained the members of the Woman's Club, and maintained their connection to the district federation. Membership grew.

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I pledge my loyalty to the Junior Clubwomen,
By doing better than ever before what work I have to do:
By being prompt, honest, courteous, by living each day
Trying to accomplish something, not merely to exist.

By the middle of the 1940s, they had established a routine of bi-monthly meetings (second and fourth Tuesday evenings) with one session devoted to business and the other to sewing. The "girls" as they originally called themselves, held one business meeting and one social event each month.

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THE FIFTIES

Juniors expanded their busy round of activities. In 1950, they sponsored a public Bridge-Canasta-Pinochle party to stimulate interest and raise money; they netted a whopping \$272 on a rummage sale and raffle featuring antique and homemade linens; they compiled and sold a cook book of their favorite recipes. Throughout the decade, they welcomed and initiated new members. Three Juniors were elected to positions in the California Federation of Junior Women's Clubs, while the Palo Alto Juniors received special recognition for their work on behalf of teens (the Conga Room at the Palo Alto Community Center) and children (the Children's Theatre.) The Juniors supported a variety of youth causes and joined other civic organizations in supporting the "Paly High Boosters' Club. Local journalists, including Herb Caen, described the energy and drive of the Juniors' project to insure and expand safely features on 101/Bayshore and their efforts to provide a mobile unit for the Junior Museum. They contributed to the purchase of incubators for Palo Alto Hospital and themselves served as "grey ladies." The Junior club maintained a good rapport with their "mother" club, the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, whose Corresponding Secretary wrote, "The Woman's Club of Palo Alto wishes to congratulate the Junior Women's Club for their outstanding achievements of the past year. The part you played in 'Build a Better Community' deserves our special praise and acclamation." She concluded her accolade with an invitation to the Juniors to celebrate together a Founder's Day event.

THE SIXTIES

During the sixties, the Juniors carried on as before, with special emphasis on service to the needs of the community. Members continued to hold office in the federation and to win awards, notably for their involvement in Palo Alto's Society for the Blind. In 1963, when the "Community Association for the Retarded, Inc." (Now Abilities United) was founded, the Juniors were quick to lend their energy and support; they held a wine tasting event at the Caravan Inn, the proceeds to go to the Bracken Guild, an affiliate of the Community Association. One of the achievements of the 1960s' Juniors was to compile and collate a "how to" notebook on how to found and run a junior club. It contained many pragmatic recommendations on how to interact with local clubs and the federation. The absence of an up-to-date scrapbook and details about activities suggests that the Juniors were beginning to look for new directions in which to invest their energies by the middle of the decade.

THE SEVENTIES

In the early 1970s, it was evident that relations between the Juniors and the PAWC were strained. The Juniors felt increasingly disconnected from the Woman's Club and wanted stronger ties with the Federation. In a unanimous vote at their first business meeting, September 9, 1971, the members present (77% of total membership) chose to seek new sponsorship and a stronger relationship with the Federation. They hoped by their decision to foster greater "sharing of ideas, information, friendship and leadership," which they felt were not forthcoming from the Woman's Club. They felt that their club was more involved "in the problems of the community." Their letter to the Woman's Club itemized their concerns as well as their sense of a lack of mutual understanding between the two clubs. At the same time, the junior club noticed declining local interest and declining membership. To address these issues, they began to solicit and accept members from throughout the Bay Area. It appears from the 1978-1979 yearbook that there were a scant nine members in the Junior Women's Club.

THE EIGHTIES

As the 1980s began, the issues between the Junior Women's Club and the Woman's Club were not resolved, although they continued to collaborate on some activities, such as the Fall Faire and a Christmas party. In March, 1981, Junior Coordinator, Helen Twomy, jr., arranged for a 40th anniversary event for the Juniors. They invited members of the Woman's Club and other Juniors from, for example, Milpitas. Later that year, the Juniors officially changed their name to Foothill Junior Woman's Club, although the Woman's Club rejected their decision. The Juniors continued to face problems with declining membership and tension with the Woman's Club. By the middle of the decade, the Junior Woman's Club—by whatever name—had essentially ceased to exist.

April 25, 1989

1988 - 1989 Summary

by

Margaret "Boots" Gould
President 1988 1989, 1992 - 1994

April 25, 1989

Dear Members,

As outgoing President, I wish to review our many activities and accomplishments and to thank the many loyal workers who gave so much to the club.

When elected President, I found that there were many conditions that needed immediate attention. During my prearranged months vacation in the East, a letter was sent to all members stating that: (1) we could not pay our bills and saving's moneys were being used, (2) members were getting older and no longer liked working, and (3) we were unable to get any new members. Further, it stated that if we sold the club house, each member would receive several hundreds of dollars dependent upon the number of years of actual club membership. Promises were made concerning pick up and return to and via the Holiday Inn. Upon my return and in checking the above, we found several miscalculations and mistatements. The Federation, after cautioning "Beware of suggestions to quit the Federation", stated that derived moneys could Not be given to individual members. The Holiday Inn stated that a pick up of only 7 members would be made at a central location and returned to that point. Each member participating would be required to get to that pick up point and to get home from same.

In spite of a rather rocky beginning, the past year has been highlighted with wonderful cooperation and determination by many loyal members and several excellent accomplishments.

Thanks to Mary Grinnell and Margaret Ray, Membership Chairmen, we now have six new members. These are the first new members since the last five remaining members of the South Palo Alto Womens Club, of which I was a member, joined five years ago. Preliminary to our joining the Womens Club of Palo Alto, the Club house of the South Palo Alto Womens Club (my former Club) was sold and it marked the beginning of the end for that Club. According to several of the older members, new memberships, preliminary to the above five, were non existent for several years.

We are equally proud of our Rental Committee consisting of Debra Reidel and Frances Payne. We have a rental telephone number and an answering machine. We no longer lose those calls that formerly came to an empty building. Frances, took the calls, gave the necessary information and passed it on to Debbie. Debbie screened the applicant, showed the facility, and processed the rest of the rental. These two ladies have been responsible for over \$10,000 profit this year which allowed us to accomplish several other high priority items.

There were several maintenance items that had to be done immediately. We had a fire extinguisher installed in the hood of the stove and some work done in the furnace room to meet fire code standards. Termite work was long

Yours in Federation

Margaret (Booker) Smith

overdue. There was a large wall crack in the storage room and the back stairs (fire escape) was declared completely unsafe for multiple person use. Dry rot under and behind the sink added to the termite dangers and all had to be corrected immediately. Rain gutters were inspected and found to be unusable. New rain gutters, a new kitchen sink, plumbing repair in the bathrooms, and a Palo Alto Ordinance Seismic Report (lost/delayed for years which could have caused penalties) cost thousands of dollars to correct. By careful planning and management, we were able to accomplish these tasks and remain within our budget. We are indebted to Dorothy Arbuckle and her House and Grounds Committee for the many contributions in this area.

After many calls and trips to several banks, we located our safety deposit box. An up-to-date invoice and information on keys were not available. Many important papers, including our Title, were found and reviewed.

Keys to the clubhouse which involved responsibilities and security were in the hands of many people and there was no record available. The bylaws state that the President must receive these keys and be responsible for assignment records. This necessitated the complete rekeying of the clubhouse. One of our renters paid for this.

I wish to say a very special thankyou to: (1) Helen Rowan who worked with the Insurance Co. to review and update the Club's blanket insurance coverage. (2) Mary Ellen Schmitt and her Committee who again and as usual did an excellent job on the Fashion Show. Sorry I missed it. I was in Santa Barbara having a Grandson. (3) Dorothy Arbuckle and her Committee for the work on the rummage sale. I am sure that it will be a huge success. (4) Grace Bodley for her work on the yearbooks and newsletters this year and for many years past. (4) My Secretary and Treasurer and all Board Members who did their jobs under difficult conditions. Thank you Betty, May, Edith, and all others who contributed to our successful year.

We had a beautiful Christmas Tea with 2 Christmas trees and decorations in every room. We had many compliments. Sorry some of you missed it.

Many donations have been made to charities including the Homeless, Memorials, Veterans, and Goodwill. We also provided a \$300.00 scholarship to a deserving high school student.

As noted, we have accomplished much this year. Under my theme of "Friendship and Loyalty", many positive steps were taken to improve the Club's image and efficiency. Important tasks were done successfully, within the budget and I pass on a solvent treasury.

To all of the old and new friends, please accept my heartfelt thanks. You have made it a most enjoyable and profitable year.

Yours in Federation

Margaret Gould
Margaret (Boots) Gould

Women's History Saved a Women's Club

by Jeanne Farr McDonnell

The Women's Club that started in the last 19th century flourished for more than 50 years. They were in the politics of pure food, good schools, clean towns with parks and playgrounds, and many other local, state, and national causes. In the days before adult education, women's clubs brought in notable speakers and encouraged members to learn about gardening, art, literature, politics, environment, peace, community-building, and, always, music. Despite their earlier contributions and popularity in the first half of this century, women's clubs have been on the decline in recent years. Many are adapting to modern times, but the demise of some women's clubs is unfortunate because they have a solid institutional base of many years' experience and a track record that provides the continuity essential to human health and happiness. Being a member is like having accomplished ancestors you are proud of.

A women's club that brought itself back from near death is located in Palo Alto, and history was probably the medicine that restored it to health. In 1993-94, the city celebrated its centennial, not coincidentally the same centennial anniversary as the local women's club. The first club president correctly said that the club was the women's branch of government at a time when women did not vote and the town council was entirely male.

A number of local history-minded people associated with the then-Women's Heritage Museum volunteered to help the Palo Alto Women's Club celebrate this landmark anniversary. In the process, they found out how much that the

town prides itself on was originated and fostered by the club.

Through various projects concerned with the club's history, the

Women's History Saved a Women's Club

town prides itself on was originated and fostered by the club. Through various projects concerned with the club's history, the an intention that had done so much shouldn't be permitted, like old generals, to just fade away. They joined and recommended the club to their friends and associates. The membership in their six years was more than doubled and the club offers its members a range of activities.

In 1993, the club had a bridge group, annual fashion shows and costume sales, and a monthly lunch meeting with a speaker. There was also an investment club, monthly after-work socials, and a program-lunch that routinely attracts 30 or more. All this happens in a historic building constructed in 1916 that the women of that time paid for entirely.

The other club group that does wonders, if I as its chair may say so, is the history committee. Anyone who has ever transcribed minutes from old handwritten record books will understand the achievement of four of us who transcribed club minutes of 1894 through 1920, so far. These copies, with annual summaries, will be deposited in the archives of the University of California at Santa Cruz, California Historical Society, and Palo Alto Historical Association, and a copy with the originals will be kept in the clubhouse.

The history committee also writes a monthly history column for the newsletter, is working on an inventory of the historical materials in the clubhouse, is putting a display about the history of the club in the town library (which the club founded), and have sponsored dramatic monologues relating to California history for the monthly lunch each March.

I sensed the power of history long before I actually saw it in action. History brought this organization back to life and it has been rewarding to see that. I would like to recommend to NWHP readers that they investigate a women's club near them. If it isn't what they particularly like, join and help restore it. The Palo Alto Women's Club history committee's motto is "The Past: A Century of Doing Good. The Future: A Century of Doing Better."

For further information, contact Jeanne Farr McDonnell at 1509 Portola Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306, or jfarrd@aol.com

Editorial Oversight

Molly Winchby MacGregor

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"Women's History Network News" is published quarterly by the National Women's History Project for Women's History Network participants. Brilliant suggestions and ideas for articles are always welcome.

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A number of local history-minded people associated with the then-Women's Heritage Museum volunteered to help the Palo Alto Women's Club celebrate this landmark anniversary. In the process, they found out how much that the

The history committee also writes a monthly history column for the newsletter, is working on an inventory of the historical materials in the clubhouse, is putting a display about the history of the club in the town library (which the club founded), and have sponsored dramatic monologues relating to California history for the monthly lunch each March.

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Historical Overview from 1894 to 2017

by

Margaret Rodgers Feuer

Past President 1997 - 1999

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1894 – 1916:

Birth: Charles Dickens never knew that he was the impetus behind the creation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). In 1868, when journalist Jane Cunningham Croly and other women writers were denied admission to a banquet honoring Dickens at the all male New York Press Club, they reacted by forming an exclusively female club. Named *Sorosis*, it met for 21 years before it joined in 1890 with other women's group across the nation to form the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). Their goal was to allow women of diverse interests to gather outside the home for "Self Improvement, Mutual Help and Community Involvement." The Woman's Club of Palo Alto (PAWC) joined the GFWC in 1898 and the California Federation of Women's Clubs (CFWC) in 1900.

Twenty-four women met on June 20, 1894 at the extant Presbyterian Church to form the Woman's Club of Palo Alto and sign its Constitution. The Club's first president was Dr. Mary Grafton Campbell, a medical school graduate and a former member of the Woman's Club of Chicago. She told these twenty-four charter members that Palo Alto now had "city mothers as well as city fathers, thus ensuring its better nature." Known as the "Mother of the Club", Campbell's encouragement of Julia Gilbert and Anna Zschokke would earn similar sobriquets for them as "Mother of the Palo Alto Library" and "Mother of the Palo Alto School System" respectively.

Julia Gilbert established the City's first Reading Room in 1896, using several shelves in Simpkins Book Store at 166 University Avenue. The Room was stocked with 200 volumes purchased with the proceeds of book socials and author's teas. That same year, the Club's Constitution was amended to require dues for the purpose of funding the Reading Room. The Room was staffed by Club members until 1899 when Annie and Elizabeth Hadden were hired as librarians. The Reading Room became a lending Library and moved several times before the Club decided in 1902 that a permanent, public facility was needed. President Dyer (1900-1901) applied for a matching fund grant of ten thousand dollars from the Carnegie Foundation. The Club raised \$700.00 and the City promised to contribute 10% annually if the grant was obtained. By 1902, the City responded to the Club's petition to take over the Library and enacted an ordinance to do so. Mayor John Parkinson visited New York in 1903 to press for the Carnegie Foundation's assistance; he was successful. A ten thousand dollar grant enabled the construction and opening of the Library in 1904 at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Bryant Street. The Woman's Club donated 2,300 books plus \$17.78 in cash to the new Library. Altogether, the PAWC had spent \$4,387.00 to finance the Library effort from 1896 to 1902. Mayor Parkinson's role was significant in obtaining the Carnegie grant but it should be noted that his wife, Helen Maze Parkinson, was a major promoter of the Library and was President of the Woman's Club from 1901 to 1902. Also relevant is the

fact that Julia Gilbert, the Chair of the Club's Library Committee was Club President from 1902 to 1904. When the Public Library Board was formed, Julia Gilbert the "Mother of the Palo Alto Library" was not an appointee. A hue and cry ensued, and, in response, Gilbert was appointed. She served on the Library Board until her death in 1916. The fireplace at the Rinconada Library was dedicated to Julia Gilbert. It bore a brass plaque inscribed: "Constant source of inspiration to this library from its beginnings and for seventeen years a trustee, this fireplace is dedicated in loving appreciation of her unfailing service."

Anna Zschokke and her family moved to Palo Alto in 1890 so that her children might attend Stanford University when it opened in 1891. Zschokke kept a record of the newcomers, births, deaths and businesses in her new community. This account, called The Pioneer History of Palo Alto was chronicled in The Palo Alto Live Oak. While important to historians today, it was more important in 1893. Her statistical record showed 54 school age children plus the distance of 2 miles and a few inches between Palo Alto and the Mayfield School District. These were the criteria needed to establish a separate Palo Alto School District. The first elementary school was built on Bryant Street below University Avenue in 1903. "The Mother of the Palo Alto School System" next saw the need for a high school. Using her private funds, she erected a three-room high school and a smaller science lab on her property at 524 and 526 Forest Avenue. A larger district high school was not opened until 1901. Just as California women lost their first bid for suffrage in 1896, so too did Anna Zschokke fail by a few votes in her 1896 bid for a School Board seat. The all-male School Board did, however, appoint her repeatedly as School Census Marshal. Sometimes referred to as "General Whipper-In", Zschokke realized the importance of educating children. Her zeal began a long tradition of Palo Alto's dedication to excellence in education.

Throughout its first two decades, the Club set the tone for Palo Alto's future. They recommended park locations, lobbied for a sewer system, secured a rest room and a lunchroom for high school girls and provided employment for transients through "The Friendly Wood Yard." As early as 1901, the Club's Village Improvement Committee bought and planted trees along University Avenue, Alma and at the train station. The ladies, in their buggies and with buckets in hand, watered the trees. Pruning sometimes required the assistance of husbands. In another environmental effort that spanned three counties, the Club worked with the San Jose Woman's Club, President David Starr Jordan and the Sempervirens Fund to establish Big Basin Redwoods State Park in 1902. Upon becoming charter members of The Save The Redwoods League in 1918, the Clubhouse hosted joint fundraising events for the Redwoods League with the Scouts, the Palo Alto Civic League and local conservation groups. In 1905, The Political Equality League published an interesting eight-page brochure entitled "A Plea for the Preservation of Flowers". Various authorities wrote articles opposing the "wanton destruction" of native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Club members Isabel Karns, Mrs. Rosebrook and Anna Zschokke were among the contributors. With the outbreak of a typhoid epidemic in 1903, Club members supplied meals to victims. The Club was fortunate in having talented women such as Dr. Clelia Mosher, who, as Special Assistant to the Palo Health Department, spearheaded the City's epidemic response.

Two issues arose in the early years of the PAWC that proved painful. The first involved the admission of Black Woman's Clubs into the GFWC. Soon after the GFWC was founded in 1890, it adopted the motto "Unity In Diversity". The hope was that sectional differences would never disrupt the GFWC.

That hope was put to the test in 1900 when the GFWC held a National Convention in Milwaukee. Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, a black journalist, abolitionist and suffragist attended as a representative of two bi-racial clubs: the New England Woman's Club and the New England Woman's Press Club as well as a representative of the all black New Era Club. All three clubs were members of the GFWC. Federation President Rebecca D. Lowe, a Georgia native, told Ruffin that she could be seated as a representative of the white clubs but not the black one. When Ruffin refused on principle, her credentials were ripped from her chest on the floor of the convention hall. Newspapers across the nation championed Ruffin. Supportive clubs threatened to leave the Federation while the Southern clubs lobbied to insert the word "white" as a qualification for membership in the GFWC.

The question of black admission was raised again at the 1902 GFWC National Convention in Los Angeles. California Clubs had been discussing the issue for two years at the individual Club level as well as at the February 1902 State Convention in San Francisco. Many Bay area women argued for open admission. One was Mabel Craft a San Francisco Examiner reporter and member of the San Francisco Woman's Club. Craft wrote "Many ladies who are intellectual, sympathetic and lovable have an inherent prejudice against the negro...if we cannot find it in our hearts to...help colored women...we had better break up our Federation."

Many California clubs, including the PAWC, shied away from the subject. Club minutes show that our Board agreed to send 2 delegates to both conventions and to pay their expenses. However, Board motions to discuss the issue were either tabled or laid aside. President Julia Gilbert in March 1902 read an article to the membership concerning admission of black clubs to the GFWC. A motion was made that our delegates be instructed to vote "against the admission of colored clubs to the GFWC." The motion lost. Just as Palo Alto reached no clear decision, neither did the National Convention. Individual Clubs were left to admit black women or not as they wished.

The second troublesome issue occurred when the Club, in 1903, decided to operate a Gymnasium for boys in a rented space on University Avenue. The idea arose from several lectures to the membership on the importance of physical culture for school children. An ad-hoc committee, known as the Gymnasium Trustees, were charged by the Board to open the Gym. They rented space, purchased equipment and hired an instructor. The hope was that, in a few years time, the PAWC could turn over the operation of the gymnasium to the School District just as they had turned over the Library to the City in 1902. The committee worked for a year with the County Board of Education, the Palo Alto School Board, High School teachers and their students until the School Board agreed to pay a per student fee. That fee, however, did not cover expenses nor recoup the prior investment. Board supervision of the project had been lax. When they learned of an \$800 debt and the threat of a lawsuit from the landlord, they were dismayed. A front-page article in The Citizen in May 1906 called the gymnasium

situation "a sorry plight" and encouraged businesses to assist "that estimable body" because "Palo Alto without a Woman's Club would have been like a springtime without its showers and its flowers." The Club, realizing that it had been lax in supervising the Gym's finances, assumed responsibility for the debt and took out a bank loan. The loan took five years to pay off. This episode affected later events. For example, twenty-seven members resigned in 1916 when the Club was forced to mortgage their new building because construction costs were double the estimate. The members who quit were fearful of another, more protracted bout of indebtedness similar to that of the Gymnasium. No one would disagree that building the Clubhouse was a great achievement. However, when Board decisions jeopardize the Club's financial stability, they also jeopardize the Club's primary mission to do charitable community work. Even today, one hundred years after the Clubhouse was built, members continue to resign when confronted by controversial financial and philosophical decisions by the Board.

The Club was incorporated in 1904. That same year, there was enough money to purchase a \$1,250 lot for a future Clubhouse. Many members were concerned that the property, which was on the corner of Homer Avenue and Cowper Street, was "too far out in the country." These worries were soon forgotten as the PAWC began intensive fundraising efforts to cover future construction costs. These efforts included bake sales, hosting sell-out speakers such as Helen Keller, organizing three day-long, city-wide festivals and the publication of both a Woman's Club Cookbook in 1903 and a history of The Santa Clara Valley in 1911. Increased members' dues and contributions from prominent leaders such as City Attorney Norman Malcolm were all part of what would be a fourteen-year endeavor.

Meanwhile, events of a political nature captured the imagination of the women. Having lost the election for California Woman's Suffrage in 1896, Club members poured their hearts into fighting for its passage in 1911. Over half of the Club's speakers dealt with "The Woman Question." Proponents such as David Starr Jordan and Susan B. Anthony roused the women while opponents of suffrage experienced the members' wrath. One anti-suffrage speaker was met with "a storm of questions and objections...from the audience... hostile to his ideas." A copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Independent Equal Suffrage League of Palo Alto was attached to the 1904 Board minutes. In 1911, although the Club did not officially support suffrage, the majority of its members certainly did. Their belief that women should participate in politics had been demonstrated in 1909, when they endorsed Cornelia Place, a founder of a local real estate company, for election to the Palo Alto School Board. She became the first woman elected to that position in Palo Alto. It took no convincing for Club members, along with their President Emily Pardee Karns to campaign house to house in 1911. President Karns was the Chair of the Palo Alto Equal Suffrage League while member Annie Corbert was the Treasurer of the California State Equal Suffrage Association. Anna Zschokke, Annie Corbert and Jennie Arnott were founders and officers of the Palo Alto Political Equality League. Member, Dr. Clelia Mosher was the first woman to vote. After voting, Dr. Mosher, whose specialty was women's health, proclaimed that voting could cure any female illness.

No Club member did more to publicize the suffrage movement than Alice Locke Park.

Following in the footsteps of her cousin, Quaker suffragist Lucretia Mott, Alice Park devoted her life to the causes of woman's suffrage, feminism, pacifism, human rights and environmentalism. As early as 1898, Park had protested Jane Stanford's establishment of a female quota for women at that University. During the 1911 campaign, her Palo Alto residence at 611 Gilman Street became a clearing-house for the dissemination of news stories, pamphlets, copies of speeches and articles in support of women's rights. Park's contribution to gaining suffrage for California women was invaluable. After suffrage was won, she wrote the 1913 California legislation that granted women equal rights of guardianship over their children.

The dream of building a clubhouse, first mentioned in the minutes of April 1, 1896, was finally realized twenty years later. On June 20, 1916 ground was broken and a cornerstone laid. For two and a half months, the Building Committee met. Emily Pardee Karns was appointed Chairwoman by President M. A. Coburn, with the agreement of committee members Mmes. Buchan, Cumberson, Greene, La Peire, Lucy, Preisker and Miss Irene Buchan. Legal advice was provided by attorney, Norman Malcolm and architectural plans were presented by architect, Charles Edward Hodges (1866-1944) of the San Francisco firm of Hodges and Mitchell.

The choice of Charles Edward Hodges (1866-1944) as architect was a propitious one. Hodges was born in London and immigrated to America in 1888. He began his architectural career as a draftsman for the Boston firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, which had been founded by noted architect, Henry Hobart Richardson. In 1893 Hodges was sent west to serve as draftsman and supervising architect for the Stanford University building project. Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead quit the project due to disagreements with the Stanfords. After Leland Stanford's death, Jane Stanford appointed Hodges as the Stanford Resident Architect, a post he held from 1900 until his resignation in 1906. He then established his own San Francisco firm with architect W. Gordon Mitchell from 1910 to 1917, became an associate architect in New York City from 1919 to 1933 and principal of his own firm in Los Angeles from 1935 to 1940. He died in 1944 at the age of 80 in Corona del Mar, California. Hodges was elected an Associate Member of the American Institute of Architects. During Hodges years in the San Francisco Bay Area, he built some of the finest residences and fraternities on the Stanford campus as well as buildings in Palo Alto including the Clubhouse. Eight buildings designed by him are on the Palo Alto Historical Inventory - one of which is the Woman's Club of Palo Alto.

The last meeting of the Building Committee was on September 11, 1916. During this period, the Committee and the architect made changes to the plans, W. F. Fox was chosen as contractor, construction costs doubled from the estimated \$5,300 to \$10,590, a mortgage loan was secured, Mrs. Karns divorced again, becoming Mrs. Dixon, and the Clubhouse was built.

A gala reception attended by 500 Palo Alto residents was held at the Club on September 16, 1916. A Palo Alto Times article noted "We believe the Woman's Club...is preparing to contribute a great deal to the future of the City." This prediction proved true as the Woman's Club became the place where community groups gathered and where civic, philanthropic and social events were held. The Building Committee chairwoman and

former Club President, Emily Pardee Karns Dixon called September 16th "a glorious day."

Architectural Description prepared for the National Register of Historic Places
Application in 2014

The exterior of the main facade is stucco above a water table at the height of the sills of larger windows. Below this is a band of wood clapboarding that runs around the entire building. Decorative half-timbering, details of the main entry portico, and doorways and windows are wood. Large oak trees surround the building.

The main entrance of the building faces southeast onto Homer Avenue. The major massing of the structure is made up of a rectangular, gable-roofed main hall along the southwest side of the lot and a lower, hip-roofed section extending to the northeast. With its corner-lot location, the effect of this design is to keep to the residential scale and character of the neighborhood while accommodating an assembly hall. The water table and horizontal clapboarding de-emphasize the height of the building and tie together the different elements. The gable end of the main hall and an entry portico dominate the Homer Avenue elevation of the building. The gable end of the hall projects slightly from the rest of the building, with a single, large bay of seven mullioned windows extending almost its full width. The entry portico to the right of this projects even further forward and has the appearance of a *porte cochere*. Seen obliquely by an arriving pedestrian or vehicle, the portico marks the entrance and offsets the mass of the main hall, welcoming guests into a doorway recessed into the hip roofed portion of the building. A bay of mullioned windows at the right of the entry completes the composition of the Homer Street facade.

From Cowper Street, the northeast facade of the Club has a more modest, residential feel. A slightly projecting bay with two windows and a chimney helps turn the corner from Homer Street and breaks up the long side of the hip-roofed section of the building. This also expresses the smaller, living-room-scale gathering space inside. Continuing to the northwest, four pairs of smaller, double-hung windows further bring down the scale of the building to fit with neighboring homes.

The northwest facade of the building is utilitarian. The rear-most walls are shingled rather than stucco above the water table. There is a back entryway into the kitchen.

Large single and paired windows, similar to those on the front of the building that provide light into the main assembly hall, dominate the southwest facade of the building.

The interior of the building includes a ballroom for lunches, programs and events, a foyer, a kitchen, the Fireside Room, two restrooms and a small room for Board and committee meetings. The interior floors are original maple tongue and groove in the ballroom with original fir and oak flooring in the boardroom and elsewhere. The interior walls in the ballroom, and Fireside Rooms are original also with fir board and batten wainscot and plaster walls and ceiling.

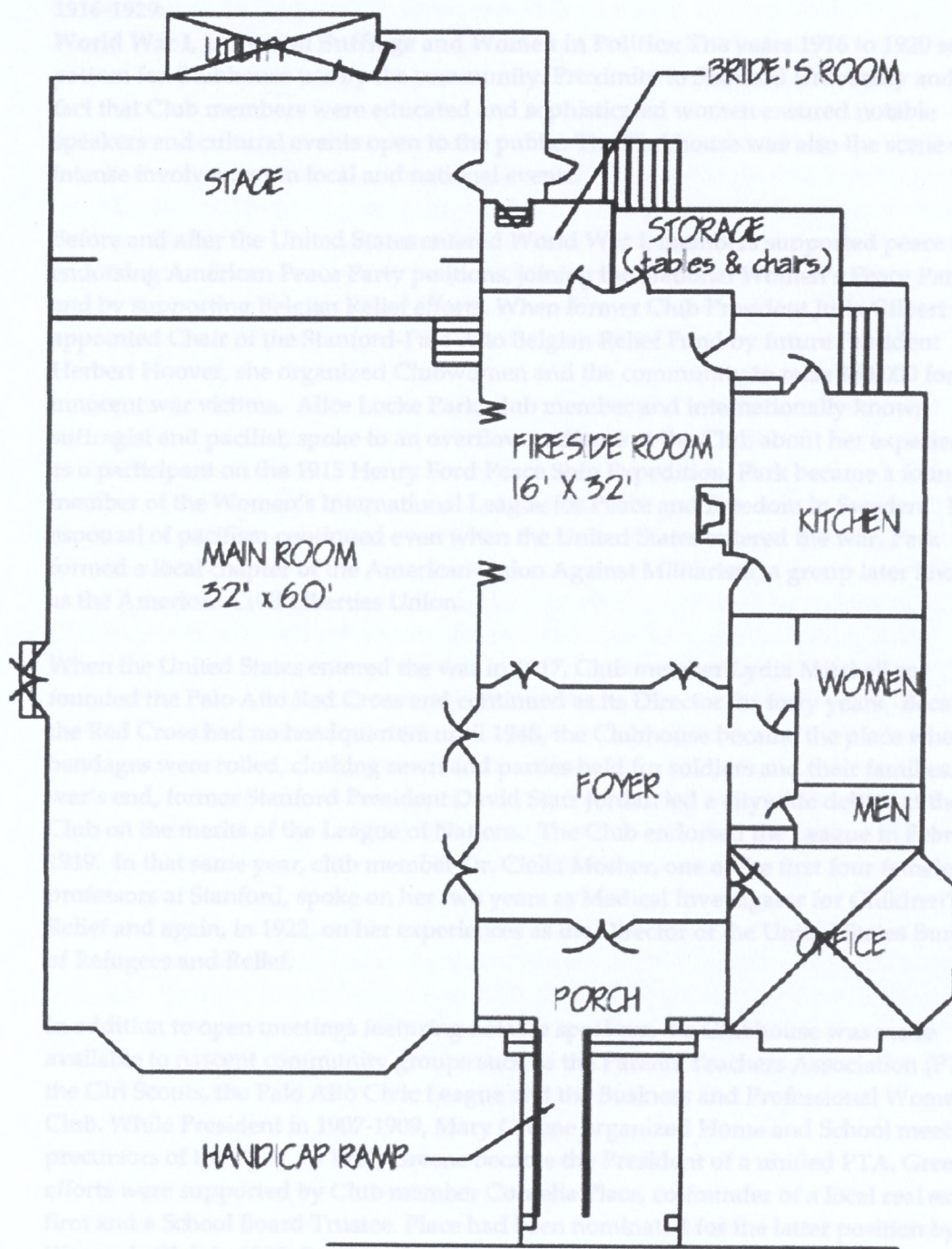
The stage floor is oak. The stage has an advertising oleo curtain installed in 1926 by an advertising agency that paid the Woman's Club \$500 to hang the curtain. Local businesses were charged to advertise on the curtain. It is an historical artifact of local businesses in the early 20th century and one of two existing in Palo Alto. It is still in use today.

The fireplaces are original and examples of the Arts and Crafts style. The fireplace in the Fireside Room is made of salt glazed tiles manufactured by the Steiger Terra Cotta and Pottery Company of San Francisco. The company only made these salt glazed tiles from 1910 to 1915.

The original building is essentially unaltered from its 1916 design and function although there has been some rehabilitation. One of the original mullioned windows on the northeast façade was removed in the 1957 bathroom remodel and replaced by a modern single pane window. In the 2009 bathroom remodel, the Club took great care to follow the original design and replaced the 1957 window with a replica of the architect's original design. Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) presented the Woman's Club with a PAST Preservation Award for this restoration of the window in 2010. The sign reading "The Woman's Club of Palo Alto" on the southeast façade is made of carved wood compatible with the building's craftsman design elements. When donated by Emily Pardee Karns Dixon in 1931, the word "Woman's" was spelled "Women's." The spelling was corrected in 2015. In 2016, a wheelchair ramp was built at the west side of the building and 2017 saw the removal of the front entrance wheelchair ramp plus seismic retrofitting of a rear chimney at Cowper Street.

Interior changes involved a kitchen remodel in 1961 to accommodate modern appliances. The restrooms were updated twice, once in 1957 and again in 2009. The Board meeting room was remodeled to include housing for the Club's archives in 1999 and a small bride's room was redecorated for wedding rentals that same year. In 2017, an ADA compliant elevator was installed in the former bride's room. (Benjamin Pinney, M. Arch.)

The choice of a Tudor-Craftsman style for the Woman's Club ensured that it would blend into its residential setting. It is significant architecturally because it is a prime example of a woman's clubs built during the peak of the Woman's Club Movement. The Clubhouse has a charming home-like quality along with functional space suitable for club meetings, lectures, balls, concerts and community gatherings. It welcomes women today as it did in 1916. The Woman's Club members have pride in their building and take great care in preserving this historical treasure by Charles Edward Hodges.



Existing Floor Plan in June 2017

1916-1929:

World War I, Universal Suffrage and Women in Politics: The years 1916 to 1920 set the pattern for Clubhouse use by the community. Proximity to Stanford University and the fact that Club members were educated and sophisticated women ensured notable speakers and cultural events open to the public. The Clubhouse was also the scene of intense involvement in local and national events.

Before and after the United States entered World War I, members supported peace by endorsing American Peace Party petitions, joining the National Women's Peace Party and by supporting Belgian Relief efforts. When former Club President Julia Gilbert was appointed Chair of the Stanford-Palo Alto Belgian Relief Fund by future President Herbert Hoover, she organized Clubwomen and the community to raise \$50,000 for innocent war victims. Alice Locke Park, club member and internationally known suffragist and pacifist, spoke to an overflow audience at the Club about her experiences as a participant on the 1915 Henry Ford Peace Ship Expedition. Park became a founding member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Sweden. Her espousal of pacifism continued even when the United States entered the war. Park formed a local chapter of the American Union Against Militarism, a group later known as the American Civil Liberties Union.

When the United States entered the war in 1917, Club member Lydia Mitchell co-founded the Palo Alto Red Cross and continued as its Director for forty years. Because the Red Cross had no headquarters until 1948, the Clubhouse became the place where bandages were rolled, clothing sewn and parties held for soldiers and their families. At war's end, former Stanford President David Starr Jordan led a citywide debate at the Club on the merits of the League of Nations. The Club endorsed the League in February 1919. In that same year, club member Dr. Clelia Mosher, one of the first four female professors at Stanford, spoke on her two years as Medical Investigator for Children's Relief and again, in 1922, on her experiences as the Director of the United States Bureau of Refugees and Relief.

In addition to open meetings featuring notable speakers, the Clubhouse was made available to nascent community groups such as the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), the Girl Scouts, the Palo Alto Civic League and the Business and Professional Women's Club. While President in 1907-1909, Mary Greene organized Home and School meetings, precursors of the PTA. In 1917, Greene became the President of a unified PTA. Greene's efforts were supported by Club member Cornelia Place, co-founder of a local real estate firm and a School Board Trustee. Place had been nominated for the latter position by the Woman's Club in 1909. By 1918, the Club's position as the center of community life led Mayor Swain to propose that a plate be installed on the sidewalk pointing the way to 475 Homer Avenue.

A year before the 19th amendment granted universal suffrage, Club President Emily Pardee Karns Dixon formed a coalition between the PAWC and the Palo Alto Civic League to seek female candidates for the Palo Alto City Council. Together, these two groups nominated Emma Bell Blair and Mary Denison Wilt Thomas to City Council. Thomas won a seat but Blair did not get sufficient votes for election on the first ballot. Karns, who had successfully rallied Palo Alto voters for California women's

enfranchisement in 1911, did so again, and Blair won a Council seat on the 2nd ballot. The Palo Alto Times commented that "...women were...electioneering and voting and they elected Emma Bell Blair with the highest vote received."

The Woman's Club had cause to celebrate on November 16, 1920 when a "mortgage burning" party was held. Two years later, the GFWC moved into their Washington headquarters and began to play a greater role in coordinating club activities at the state and local level. The Club supported Federation and State goals on issues such as peace, prohibition, protection of women and children in industry, physical education, public school improvement, protection of the home and bans on offensive movies. State and National causes included support for Community Property and Arms Limitation.

Local philanthropic efforts continued with fundraising for the Save the Redwoods League and for the Veteran's Hospital, both during the war and the 1918 influenza epidemic. A popular speaker at Club events was Lou Henry Hoover, future First Lady and founder of the Girl Scouts in the Western United States. Her enthusiasm about the changing roles of women and girls and the opportunities inherent in scouting prompted Club members to raise funds and provide meeting space to the Palo Alto Scouts, founded in 1922, until their permanent home was built in 1925. Another speaker, long familiar to Club members who had volunteered for her when she ran the Community Center's Employment Service was Josephine Duveneck. Her impressive talks on child labor laws and on progressive education swayed Club members, who endorsed her 1923 candidacy for City Council. As the third woman elected to that post, Duveneck helped realize two goals of the Club: the hiring of May Wycoff as the City's first policewoman and the dedication of Eleanor Pardee Park at Channing Avenue and Center Drive. These five acres of parkland had been donated to the City by past President Emily Pardee Karns Dixon and were named in honor of Dixon's deceased daughter.

Twice-monthly meeting for members consisted of a Business meeting and a Program meeting. Programs might feature a musical performance or speakers on topics such as drug addiction and child labor laws. In 1926, the Club stage itself took center place when an oleo curtain with colorful, oil-painted advertisements of local businesses was hung. The Club received \$500.00 from a company called The Advertising Agency, which had provided the curtain. Local businesses paid The Agency to advertise.

Throughout the 1920's women continued to be politically active but not with the single-minded fervor of the years preceding the passage of the 19th amendment. Nationwide, the reform movement lost steam as Americans focused on leisure, entertainment and conspicuous consumption. In 1928, the white middle class women of the Club supported their hometown candidate, Herbert Hoover while working class and immigrant women voted overwhelmingly for Al Smith.

1929 - 1949: The Depression, Philanthropy and the Junior Club: When the Great Depression hit in 1929, the PAWC focused on the needs of their own city by collecting, repairing and distributing used clothing and conducting food drives. A request from President Hoover led members to conduct a survey enumerating unemployed workers in Palo Alto. Board member Mrs. Zink organized members' support of the City's new

shelter for unemployed, homeless men. Named "Hotel de Zink" in honor of her husband Police Chief Harold Zink, the shelter housed, fed and provided work for 50,000 men over two and a half years. In addition, the Club raised funds for needy students and for veterans by sponsoring citywide events such as bridge games, flower and fashion shows, a play, an operetta, rummage sales and a cake contest. From 1932-1934, dues "were impossible to collect" and total cash assets were twenty-one cents which was \$8.65 less than in 1895.

The Club's greatest victory during the depression was the dedication in 1933 of a CFWC memorial hearthstone at Humboldt Redwoods State Park. Designed by architect Julia Morgan, the memorial sat amid 1,000 redwoods in a 106-acre grove purchased by Women's Clubs throughout California. The Club's conservation philosophy is beautifully expressed in the inscription on Julia Morgan's hearthstone: "Would that we were great as these and men were brotherly as trees."

The 1940's had scarcely begun when the United States entered World War II. Once again, the Clubhouse became a center for Red Cross activities, Women's Air Corps meetings and fundraising events for war bonds, nurses' scholarships and Veteran's Administration Hospital parties. Speakers presented talks relevant to the War on topics including Victory Gardens, The Role of Russia in Post War Plans, Rehabilitation of wounded soldiers, The Need for Women in The Woman's Army Corps and the United Nations.

In March of 1941, a group of thirteen young women founded the Palo Alto Junior Woman's Club under the aegis of the PAWC. The purpose of the Junior Clubs, which had first been established by the GFWC in 1932, was to encourage volunteerism among younger women aged 16 to 35. One of the leading figures in the founding was Mrs. Clement Arnold, then president of the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, who saw the need for the new organization. According to the rules set up in August, 1941, the Juniors would be in charge of one Woman's Club luncheon per year and be allowed to meet in the Club House on the second Tuesday of every month. These young women quickly established a connection with the district federation - *Loma Prieta*. Their by-laws committed them to involvement in local civic, philanthropic, educational, and social activities. In the fall of 1941, they selected the chrysanthemum as their club flower and devised a pledge:

I pledge my loyalty to the Junior Clubwomen,
By doing better than ever before what work I have to do:
By being prompt, honest, courteous, by living each day
Trying to accomplish something, not merely to exist.

The Juniors 'hit the ground running' in the summer of 1941 by hosting a barbecue for twenty-five soldiers stationed at Moffett Field. Money was raised through their dues and activities such as bake sales, bazaars, rummage sales, raffles, clothing drives, concerts, card parties, dinner parties (one spaghetti dinner event charged 55 cents), dances and amateur theatricals. They donated money to provide a new chesterfield sofa for the American Women's Voluntary Services lounge, baked cookies which went into "Santa

Packages" for soldiers at Dibble Hospital and made a cash gift to The American Red Cross, both for recordings and for a new phonograph. Palo Alto's Hospitality House (now, McArthur Park) enjoyed their services as hostesses at parties for soldiers and their families.

By the mid-1940s, the Juniors had established a routine of bi-monthly meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings. One session was devoted to business and the other to sewing. The "girls" as they originally called themselves, held one business meeting and one social event each month.

1950-1965:

Growth: From 1950 to 1965, Club membership soared to 325. This growth reflected both the increase in Palo Alto's population and post-war prosperity. It is interesting to note that most of the PAWC Presidents served only one term during this heyday as running the Club was a huge job. To better communicate with members, the first Newsletter was published in 1951.

There were 30 interest groups, elaborate teas, fashion shows, bazaars, a competitive Art section and a choral group. Music had always played an important part in Club life. In the early 1900's a stereopticon was purchased for community singing events. The Choral group, established in the 1920's, performed for the Club and throughout the community. The PAWC Archives, which contain many boxes of sheet music, bear witness to the popularity of singing at the Club. Singers and musicians comprised one fourth of the programs from 1894 to the mid eighties. Today, musical performances are heard at holiday programs in December. Talented Club members have always provided piano selections at Club meetings. Sue Kemp currently provides background music on the Club's Steinway at every program meeting. Sue was preceded by Irene Lawrence from 1980 to the 1990's.

Visual arts were also a significant factor in Club life as attested by the oil paintings which still grace the Club walls. Some of these paintings were purchased, but most were awarded to PAWC and Junior Club members by the CFWC. In 1965, the Club's art inventory listed twenty two paintings; by 1972, that number had diminished to seventeen. Today, there are six paintings remaining. They are: "Storm Point Lobos", which was purchased in 1951 from the artist, Dr. Redewell; "Ranunculas" by Elsie Grossman, awarded to PAWC in 1940; "Pink Tulips in White Vase" by Isabel Scheidt, which won a 3rd place award for the Palo Alto Juniors; "Still Life" of flowers, vase and bowl, purchased from V. S. Hankins; "Along The Coast" by Bertha Amet, presented to the PAWC by the CFWC; and, finally, the winner of a 1955 award - "Pink Geraniums" by Jennie Crawford, past president to the Women Artists of the West.

Philanthropic giving flourished during this period. Between \$1,000 and \$3,000 was donated annually to charities such as the Veterans, the Cancer and Tuberculosis Funds, the March of Dimes, the Red Cross and the United Nations. Local groups such as the Palo Alto Historical Association, the Junior Museum, the Library and Palo Alto Hospitals benefitted as well.

To add to the vibrancy of the Clubhouse, townspeople used the building as a gathering place. Examples were the years from 1950-1960 when the Unity Palo Alto Community Church and the Palo Alto Unitarian Church met at the Clubhouse before finding permanent homes. In 1956, West Bay Opera held its first performance at the Woman's Club. Established in 1955, it is California's second oldest opera company. Recognized nationally for its artistic standards, it is a training ground for future world-class opera singers, directors, and designers. The company continues to perform for Club benefits.

Local newspapers were filled with accounts of the activities of both the PAWC and the Juniors. The Juniors, however, stole the show with their youthful enthusiasm. In 1950, they sponsored a public Bridge-Canasta-Pinocle party to stimulate interest and raise money; they netted a whopping \$272 on a rummage sale and raffle, featuring antique and homemade linens; they compiled and sold a Cookbook of their favorite recipes. Throughout the decade, they welcomed and initiated new members. Three Juniors were elected to positions in the California Federation of Junior Women's Clubs, while the Palo Alto Juniors received special recognition for their work on behalf of teens by establishing the Conga Room at the Palo Alto Community Center and for children through the Children's Theatre. The Juniors engaged in a variety of youth causes and joined other civic organizations in supporting the "Paly High Boosters' Club. Local journalists, including Herb Caen, glowingly described the energy and drive of the Juniors' project to insure and expand safety features on 101/Bayshore and their efforts to provide a mobile unit for the Junior Museum. They also purchased incubators for Palo Alto Hospital and served there as "grey ladies." The Junior club maintained a good rapport with their "mother" club, the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, whose Corresponding Secretary wrote, "The Woman's Club of Palo Alto wishes to congratulate the Junior Women's Club for their outstanding achievements of the past year. The part you played in 'Build a Better Community' deserves our special praise and acclamation." She concluded her accolade with an invitation to the Juniors to celebrate a Founder's Day event together at the Clubhouse.

Realizing the importance of mentors, the Juniors invited prominent speakers to their meetings. One such was PAWC member Kathleen Norris. A prolific writer, she produced blockbuster novels every six months for thirty years. Norris was also a nationally popular speaker on topics such as pacifism, free speech and women in politics. By hosting a talk show on San Jose radio station KEEN, Norris provided a forum for Junior Club members to produce their own shows.

1966 - 1997:

Decline and "Sale of the Clubhouse": It took half a century for American women to fully realize the tremendous potential inherent in winning the right to vote. 1965 saw women entering college and the marketplace in record numbers. These two factors plus the advent of feminism, birth control and the sexual revolution caused a decline in Women's Club memberships across the nation. Many Clubhouses were sold. The concept of teas and volunteerism seemed anachronistic to the younger generation. The Palo Alto Woman's Club did not escape this downward spiral.

Membership in The Junior Club of Palo Alto also began to decline for the same societal reasons as those of the PAWC. The relationship between the Juniors and the PAWC

became strained by the 1970's. The Juniors felt increasingly disconnected from the Woman's Club and wanted stronger ties with the Federation. In a unanimous vote at their first business meeting, September 9, 1971, with 77% of their members present, they voted to seek new sponsorship and a stronger relationship with the Federation. They hoped by their decision to foster greater "sharing of ideas, information, friendship and leadership," which they felt were not forthcoming from the Woman's Club. Their club, they argued, was more involved "in the problems of the community" than the PAWC. Their letter to the Woman's Club addressed these concerns as well a lack of mutual understanding between the two clubs. Palo Alto women were not joining the Juniors and their overall membership was declining. To address these issues, the Juniors began to solicit and accept members from throughout the Bay Area. Their 1978-1979 yearbook lists only nine members. Although the PAWC held a 40th birthday party for the Juniors in 1981, the rupture between the two groups never healed. By 1985, the Juniors had ceased to exist.

The fate of the PAWC was more fortunate than that of the Juniors, although no less traumatic. New members were not applying and older members were aging, dying or resigning. Membership was 234 in 1966, 126 in 1976, 94 in 1986 and 64 in 1996. Many of the Presidents during these years were highly competent women, but they faced daunting odds. Five had already served as President in prior decades. A faithful core of 15 to 20 women attended Business and Program meetings. Program meetings were preceded by dessert and tea. Programs featured musicians and singers; speakers were often Club members presenting slide shows of their travels or giving book reports of popular novels. There was an emphasis on Christian and spiritual values and patriotism, as evidenced by the frequency of patriotic songs and inspirational verse. An air of politeness and civility prevailed, and a great deal of care and concern was shown for members who were ill. Until 1986, when forenames became common, members referred to each other as "Mrs. Earl Smith" or "Miss Mary Jones." Communication with members consisted of a Telephone Tree, Newsletter, the Yearbook, and information provided at Business and Program Meetings.

The biggest fundraisers were Fashion Shows and Guest Night Dinners often drawing 150 members and guests. Attendance at GFWC and Loma Prieta District (LPD) Conventions remained popular with 8 to 10 women attending. Some members were officers of the LPD and of the CFWC. Bridge was the most popular of the interest groups and it contributed small amounts of its winnings to the Club Treasury. The Book Group followed the pattern set in 1894 in which one member read a book and shared the contents with the others. Philanthropic work continued in the form of an annual \$500 Scholarship given to a student entering college and an equal amount to assorted local groups. Philanthropic giving was consistent but disorganized with Board members spontaneously promoting their favorite charities. The Board, although led by very capable Presidents, found it increasingly difficult to contend with the management of the Club.

In May of 1988, a younger woman, Margaret "Boots" Gould, was elected President. Before joining the PAWC in 1985, Gould had been a member of the South Palo Alto Woman's Club on Middlefield Road. While President Gould was on vacation during the summer of 1988, a Board member who had served as President in the mid sixties, tried to

sell the Clubhouse. She and a coterie of her friends sent questionnaires promoting the sale to the membership. Lawyers and realtors were consulted. This faction assured members that everyone would share in the proceeds of the sale according to years of membership. President Gould, upon her return from summer vacation, disabused them of this notion. Any proceeds of such a sale, she noted, would revert to the GFWC, the legal owner of the building. Gould opposed the sale of the Clubhouse for legal and personal reasons. She had been a member of the South Palo Alto Woman's Club when it was sold in 1980 with plans to continue meeting in members' homes. These plans never materialized and she, along with most South Palo Alto Club members, joined the PAWC. An unexpected result of preventing the sale occurred when President Gould was nominated to a second term in May 1989. The still disgruntled "sellers" nominated themselves from the floor, packed the meeting and elected Dorothy Arbuckle as President.

Membership continued to decline until 1992 -1994 when Margaret Gould was once again elected President. Younger women who were interested in women's history and historic preservation joined the Club. Among these women were Sarah French, Marlene Prendergast, Carol Lin, Mary McCullough, Margaret Feuer and Jeanne McDonnell. These women made significant contributions especially on H&G, Rentals and Membership Committees and sponsored new members. President Gould encouraged them upgrade the facilities. Mary McCullough took charge of landscaping. Margaret Feuer convinced the Board to subscribe to Here Comes the Guide, a wedding venue book. This advertising vehicle increased Rentals bookings and stabilized the Club's finances.

The Club joined The Woman's Heritage Museum founded by Jeanne McDonnell and allowed that group to research its Archives. The Museum researchers then joined the PAWC. This affiliation proved beneficial during the 1994 Centennial Celebration of the Club and of the City of Palo Alto. Yearlong festivities included a feature article in the Palo Alto Weekly in March 1993, an open house on March 13, 1994 with music by *The Andare Quartet* and an original play, *Petticoat Politics*, written by Diane Claerbout and performed by Palo Alto High School students. These events, including the publication of Margaret R. Feuer's book: Famous Women of Palo Alto: A Walking Tour which featured many woman's club charter members, provided visibility to the Club. Female members of the City Council and School Board joined the Club during the Centennial, adding name recognition to the membership roster; one of these, former School Board member, Julie Jerome later served as a Club Co-President.

1997 - 2001:

The Club Renaissance: From 1997 to 2001, the Club underwent a renaissance under Presidents Margaret Feuer and Emily Renzel. Margaret Feuer, who joined the Club in 1993, was a law school graduate and a licensed general contractor who operated Palo Alto Construction, Inc., a residential construction company. As President from 1997 to 1999, she applied the same energy, intelligence and sense of humor needed to run her company to the revitalization of the Woman's Club.

The 1997 Board had eight out of fourteen younger members and the 1998 Board had nine. President Feuer had no desire to totally remake the Club. She respected the enormous

contribution and knowledge of the older members who had persevered in times of crisis and welcomed the energy and creativity of the younger members.

One of the first steps instituted by this Board was to eliminate the Business Meetings as two monthly meetings proved burdensome to women who worked and to others as well. Items needing membership approval had formerly been dealt with at Business meetings. They were now discussed and voted on at the monthly Program meetings.

Increasing membership and introducing new activities were President Feuer's priorities. Membership rose from 64 in June 1997 to 119 by June 1999. A History Committee, Investment Club, Book Club, History Tours, Line Dancing, Ballroom Dancing, Luncheon Committees, a Scholarship Committee, a Program Committee and a Tuesday Evening Social were started. The latter, begun by twenty-six year old Anne Marie Lamb proved a great success especially among members who could not attend daytime activities. Another young member, twenty-five year old Heidi Lewis, revamped the Yearbook.

The History Committee, consisting of Jeanne McDonnell, Peggy McKee, Elaine Meyer, Carol Murden and Joan Holland was organized on October 21, 1997. It transcribed Club minutes and recorded current history. In addition, it presented an historical program for Women's History Month each March and historic walking tours throughout the year. The Book Club, chaired by Jeanne McDonnell, Sue Beaver and Sharon Small flourished with a more contemporary format in which each member read the same book and discussed it. The older format, used since the Club's founding was to have one member report on a book she had read. The fifteen members of the Investment Club, chaired by Julia Powers and Sarah French, set out to challenge stereotypical female reluctance to deal with financial issues, and, of course, to make money. Programs assumed the importance they had enjoyed in the Club's founding years. Notable speakers were invited by chairs Edie Kirkwood, Laurose Richter, Sue Kemp, Joan Brennan and Emily Renzel.

The burgeoning Club activities during President Feuer's term created greater member participation, which, in turn, increased the number of women wanting to join the PAWC. The Club became a vibrant and welcoming place again. Bridge remained a favorite among older members, as did attendance at LPD and GFWC meetings, but fashion shows were discontinued. A full three-dollar lunch, cooked by members, was served at each Program Meeting netting about \$1,500 for the General Fund. By 1999, the names of volunteer luncheon chairs with their committees were published in the Yearbook and Newsletter. This fulfilled two goals: lunch duty was considered a condition of membership and serving on the committee provided a way for members to mingle.

The Club's philanthropic activities had always been generous although random. A Scholarship Committee consisting of Chair Ellen Smith, President Feuer and Julia Powers first met in November 1998. They formulated a uniform procedure for philanthropic giving. Financial aid would be given to groups whose mission was to alleviate poverty and provide opportunities for women and children. Scholarship Committee members researched non-profit groups and presented potential grantees to the Board for their approval. From 1997 to 1999, \$500 was given to the Mid Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women, \$250 to *Buen Pastor* in East Palo Alto, \$1,000 to Elizabeth Seton School

and \$500 to the Urban Ministry. A Scholarship Committee fundraiser, *Festa Italiana*, was chaired by Barbara Carlitz and held on May 13, 1999. It raised \$1,720, enabling the Scholarship Committee to provide two Hidden Villa camperships to girls from East Palo Alto.

Dues were maintained at \$50, with the exception that members who had joined before 1985 paid \$35. The cost of a full day rental was \$1,000 during 1997-1998 and Rentals income was \$26,626.00 under Chair Emily Renzel. The 1998 -1999 Rentals fee was raised to \$1,100. Rentals income rose to \$41, 998 plus \$2,400 in bookings for 2000. This is equivalent to \$62,000 (at \$1,100 per rental) in 2017 without the expense of salaried Rentals Management and bookkeeping employees. Charitable organizations received a reduced Rental fee of \$250. The Finance Committee, chaired by Barbara Carlitz and Marlene Prendergast ensured the Club's fiscal future by formulating a five to ten year Capital Plan.

The Newsletter, under editors Susie M. Richardson and Arline Dehlinger, was published monthly. It featured the first "History Corner" article on Mary Campbell: "The Mother of the Club", excerpted from President Feuer's Centennial book Famous Women of Palo Alto: A Walking Tour. History Corner articles became a regular feature of the Newsletter in an effort to acquaint members with the Club's rich history.

The Board and the Club members helped President Feuer achieve her goals of increasing membership, activities and philanthropic giving within the community. The Clubhouse was once again a welcoming place providing members with stimulating programs, activities, community involvement and friendship.

Emily Renzel (1999-2001), a law school graduate, was a well-known and respected member of the Palo Alto Community who joined the Club in 1994. Her years of service on the Planning Commission and on the Palo Alto City Council as well as her preservation of the Baylands had established her reputation as an intelligent and determined advocate. President Renzel continued the Club's renaissance begun by her predecessor with the same zealously shown in her community commitments. During her two-year term, she made the Club attractive to new members by continuing to update it, by strengthening Club activities, streamlining budgetary processes and increasing connections to the community.

Membership rose from 116 in June of 1999 to 138 in May of 2000. Rental fees were increased in July 2000 to \$1,400 and in January 2001 to \$1,500. Security deposits also increased from \$250 to \$500. Dues remained accessible to all at \$50 and thirteen long time members were granted Honorary status, which exempted them from paying dues.

Volunteer luncheon chairs were assigned to randomly selected committees. These were then published in the Yearbook. Each committee chair was given \$100 to help defray members' expenses. Building upgrades continued; a few examples were the refurbished Bride's Room, the reupholstered banquette in the Ballroom and a new Craftsman table and lamp in the foyer. President Renzel had the property line at the side and back of Club surveyed; the neighbor on Cowper Street contributed \$1,500 to the \$4,000 survey cost. Participation in the LPD and in the CFWC was carried on by the older members.

There was less enthusiasm for the GFWC when the Federation raised the dues assessment of each member from \$13 to \$23. Name tags were one of the simplest but most helpful innovations at Program meetings as was the copy machine purchased for the office. In addition to the monthly Newsletter, members received email notifications and telephone calls to ensure participation in Club events.

The Scholarship Committee donated \$5,000 to the Mid Peninsula Network for Battered Women in 1999 - 2000. In 2000, the name of the Scholarship Committee was changed to the Philanthropy Committee. Under Ellen Smith's chairmanship, the Committee guidelines were augmented.

The success of these Renaissance years (1997-2001) was built on respect. Presidents Feuer and Renzel felt deep admiration for the abilities, achievements and knowledge of the Presidents and members who had preceded them. They continued to solicit their opinions and offer them positions on the Board and on Committees. They held to the truism that to build is a slow and laborious task of years while to destroy can result from the thoughtless act of a single day. They used the traditions and history of the PAWC as a foundation on which to create the vibrant Club of today.

Since its inception, the PAWC has had a Philanthropy Committee. Early members held high teas, sold food at the City's July 4th celebrations and sponsored cultural events to finance this committee. Donations were made to the construction of the first high school, the creation of the first library, the purchase and planting of trees and to helping residents of the pioneer town who needed food and clothing. Sometimes these endeavors entailed creativity rather than money. A "Friendly Woodyard", for instance, enabled "hoboes" to earn money through chopping wood.

Between 1915 and 1948, the Club's philanthropic program centered on relief efforts necessitated by two World Wars and the Great Depression. National prosperity during the 1950's and 1960's was reflected in \$1,000 donations to causes such as the Veterans, the Redwoods League, the PA Junior Museum, PAHA, the Cancer Society and the March of Dimes. Also, during the 1950's, a separate Scholarship Fund was established which gave stipends of \$300 to \$500 to deserving seniors at local High Schools. The fund was maintained by Board contributions in memory of deceased members and by several bequests from members' estates.

Although the philanthropic efforts of the PAWC had always been generous, they were random. In 1996, at board member Margaret Feuer's urging, the Club contributed \$1,500 to St. Elizabeth Seton School which served minority students. In 1997, the Board authorized the formation of a Scholarship Committee. From 1997 to 1999, \$500 was given to the Mid Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women, \$250 to *Buen Pastor* in East Palo Alto, \$1,000 to Elizabeth Seton School and \$500 to the Urban Ministry. A Scholarship Committee Fundraiser, *Festa Italiana* was chaired by Barbara Carlitz and held on May 13, 1999. It raised \$1,720 enabling the Scholarship Committee to provide two Hidden Villa camperships to young girls from East Palo Alto.

In December 1999, the Scholarship Committee was renamed the Philanthropy Committee. Chaired by Ellen Smith, it established guidelines and a formal procedure for

choosing beneficiaries. The committee was funded by members' individual donations, fundraising events and by the Board. As a non-profit organization, it was suggested that the Board's contribution should be 5% of income. The guidelines were:

1. We will make donations to organizations directly.
2. Donations will be to organizations, not to individuals.
3. We will consider only organizations suggested by Club members.
4. We will focus on women and children, although we will not limit ourselves to organizations strictly serving them.
5. We will support organizations throughout our membership area, in order to be of service where there is serious need.
6. We will support organizations with a direct service or program.
7. The maximum grant we will make to any one organization will be 20% of the funds available.
8. Donation decisions will be made in April with recommendations going to the Board in May.

Today, Club funds and donations enable the Woman's Club to continue its 123-year tradition of philanthropic contributions to the local community. The distribution of the Club's philanthropy awards takes place at the June Program meeting and is one of the highlights of the Club year.

2001 – 2009:

Growth and Friendship: The effects of this Renaissance were felt in the Co-Presidency of Sarah French and Julie Jerome (2001-2003) and Wanda Cavanaugh (2003-2005). During their terms, membership grew to capacity at 225 with annual waiting lists of 25 to 40 women. Capacity membership was set at 225, the number of building occupants allowed by the Fire Department.

A presidency that typified this period was that of Jana Stevens (2005-2007). The tone set by President Stevens, a natural leader, resulted in enthusiastic and energetic participation by the Board and members. The Board was determined to continue upgrading the Clubhouse and supporting Philanthropy grants. Financially, the goal was to keep expenses down and to increase the Building Reserve Fund.

\$25,000 was raised by two successful fundraisers: a Wine Tasting/Silent Auction in November 2005 and the Antiques Roadshow in May 2007. The latter event proved to be a community-building event, as it was attended by residents of Palo Alto and its surrounding communities as well as Club members. A lasting comradery was established among the committee members: President Stevens, Linda Bader, Jennifer Kleckner, Caroline Willis, Bobbi Fox, Celiene OHare, Harriet Berner, Elizabeth Moder-Stern, Glista Guilford and their chair Margaret Feuer.

Hilarious moments were shared, such as the hasty removal of artist member Judy Gittleston's nudes from the Ballroom walls when the youthful Ragazzi Boy's Chorus was scheduled to perform. Even difficult situations such as the 2007 Nominating Committee and the Webmaster's resignation were resolved with finesse by President Stevens. The website organized by Judith Schwartz introduced high tech to the Club and became a

useful tool for members and renters alike. Overall, the tenor of President Steven's term was one of hard work, fun and accomplishment.

New fundraising events such as the first Oscar Night chaired by Melaine Bales and Jeanne Aufmuth, the first Kitchen Tour chaired by Elizabeth Moder-Stern, and a Woman's Author's Night organized by Paula Sandas marked the 2007-2009 Presidency of Sharon Small. A Garden Club grant was obtained based on landscaping plans designed by an ad hoc committee of Caroline Willis and Delia Laitin. Planning for a much-needed Restroom remodel was also undertaken. Preliminary drawings were executed by designer, Richard Elmore. In a direct appeal to the members, Board member Pat Davis raised \$35,000 toward the estimated construction costs of \$50,000. Although the PAWC By-Laws mandate that all repairs, maintenance and improvements to the building and grounds, along with three competitive bids, shall be the purview of the House and Grounds Committee, President Small appointed an ad-hoc Restroom Remodel Committee which operated independently. This set a precedent for the next decade of Club leadership when ad hoc committees, working under the guidance of the President, took over the work of Standing Committees such as House and Grounds.

2010 – 2017:

The Corporate Era: The corporate example of Silicon Valley and the influx of wealth into Palo Alto influenced the PAWC leadership during these seven years. While the Founders' original mission statement of "Friendship, Self-Improvement and Community Involvement" was acknowledged, the Club underwent a greater change in philosophy than ever before.

One President referred to the PAWC as a "business." Another thought that \$1,000 dues were realistic. Club operations were streamlined and centralized. A hierarchical structure evolved with a plethora of rules, regulations and meetings led by professional facilitators. All of the Presidents during this era experienced a problem inherent in such a controlled structure: how to maintain enthusiasm among unpaid volunteers as structural controls and micro-management increased. Without full membership support, the task of raising sufficient funds to cover expenses becomes problematic. One of the benefits of volunteering in the PAWC had always been the development of creativity and leadership skills among members.

The highlights of the Co-Presidency of Sandra Pearson and Christine Shambora (2009-2011) were the Kitchen Tour chaired by Elizabeth Moder-Stern and Debbie Nichols and a preservation award from Palo Alto Stanford Heritage for restoration of a window during the Restroom remodel. The lasting legacy of their Presidency was the completion of the latter remodel. Under the aegis of an ad hoc committee working with the Cody, Anderson, Wasney, Architects, construction costs more than doubled from \$50,000 to \$108,000. This cost overrun led to an increase in dues first to \$100 and then to \$150 plus a \$25 luncheon fee. Ultimately, the Building Reserves Fund was used to cover construction costs. Although intending to replenish the Reserves, Boards during the next few years struggled to do so because of increased expenditures.

President Eileen Brooks began her 2011-2013 Presidency by stating her desire to follow the trail "that Christine (Shambora) and Sandra (Pearson) have bravely blazed." Several

traditional volunteer fundraisers endured such as a 2012 Kitchen Tour co-chaired by Bobbi Fox and Nancy Macleod and the Childrens' Concerts led by Philanthropy chairs Jeanne Dawes and Liz Bernal and featuring club member, Nancy Cassidy. President Brooks formed a Strategic Plan Committee mandated to explore all facets of Club life including the possibility of increasing dues, outsourcing Rentals and hiring a bookkeeper. "The bravely blazed trail" led first to hiring a bookkeeper, a job formerly performed by competent Treasurers.

A seismic structural change occurred in April 2013 when the highly regarded Rentals Committee of Chair Emily Renzel, Harriet Berner and Margaret Feuer resigned. Three other Rentals committee members, Elizabeth Moder-Stern, Delia Laitin and Pat Sanders had resigned in the previous nine months. Board minutes suggest that "overwhelming hardship" was the cause of these resignations. Since presidential policy mandated only recording of consensus votes, it is impossible to know whether issues of micro-management or the Committee's letters of resignation were discussed. Although Board meetings were open to all members, the Officers and Directors were advised to refrain from discussion of divisive issues with the membership. The policy of consensus votes was violated only once during President Brook's tenure when four abstention votes (Brooks, Bohling, Krumbein and Osborne) were recorded in a 5 to 4 vote to grant honorary membership to one of the resigning Rental committee members. After the resignation of Renzel, Berner and Feuer, President Brooks and webmaster Donna Bohling became co-chairs of a larger, restructured Rentals Committee. With the succession of Vicki Sullivan to the Presidency in 2013, the issues inherent in the new Rentals format would be addressed.

The history of the Rentals Committee is an interesting one. The first rental occurred even before the grand opening of the Clubhouse on September 16, 1916, rentals have been a source of income to the Club since that time. Minutes indicate that annual Rentals income was \$900 in 1917 and \$1,356 in 1926. During the Renaissance years of 1997 to 2001, when the Clubhouse was returned to its original beauty, rentals increased dramatically. They soon accounted for more than half of Club income. Several factors caused this increase: venue visibility was increased by advertising in Here Comes The Guide, the House and Grounds Committee upgraded the interior and exterior of the building as well as the landscaping, and energetic Rentals chairs increased sales. Since 1916, the Rentals Committee had consisted of 1 to 5 women who worked alone or together to answer renters' inquiry calls, show the Club to the renters and their families, fill out the rental contract, collect the deposit and final payments, send the payments to the Club Treasurer and deal with any issues that might arise during the rental event. Rentals chairs inspected the building after each event and deducted any damage costs from the deposit fee. In 2012, the Committee, with Board approval, instituted the stipulation that renters purchase a \$1million dollar insurance policy against the costs of excessive damage. The Rentals Committee members enjoyed their work and the *comraderie* of the Committee. Most importantly, they enjoyed making a valuable contribution to the PAWC.

Rentals' Committee work entailed a delicate balance of many factors. Its members stayed abreast of fees charged by competing venues in order to recommend price increases to the Finance Committee for Board approval. The fact that the Clubhouse was in a residential neighborhood meant that the Committee could not overburden neighbors

with excessive commercial use of the building. Being mindful of the "wear and tear" which rentals brought to the historic 475 Homer Avenue was another consideration. A final priority was that the committee always tried to prevent rentals' use from displacing Club members' activities. Because of the money earned by Rentals, it was one of the most important of the Standing Committees. Perhaps this "importance" was inconsistent with the greater controls demanded by a corporate mentality.

President Vicki Sullivan (2013-2015) inherited a highly organized corporate structure which she proclaimed would allow her to "coast along for two years on the energy created" by her predecessor. During her term, the successful speaker series, *Landmark Leaders* was chaired by Carol Muller. A contract for the construction of a wheelchair ramp was awarded to Lippert and Lippert, Design, a company in which Board member Carol Lippert was a partner. A well-attended fundraiser, *Painted Chairs*, netted \$13,000 for the PAWC and \$10,000 for their partner, The Pacific Art League. Its committee consisted of Eileen Brooks, Lollie Osborne and Sue Krumbein. The reorganized Rentals Committee set out to exceed the income proposed in the 2014 budget by increasing the number of rentals from two per month to three and increasing rental fees. Income did increase but resulted in cancellation of many Club activities in order to accommodate an overwhelming number of rentals. The tremendous effort expended by the Rentals co-chairs, Brooks and Bohling led to their early resignation in April 2015. To address these problems, the Board hired a consultant for \$5,000 to suggest solutions. The Board accepted the consultant's suggestion to increase payment to the bookkeeper, whose job would now include Rentals finances and to hire a part time clerical assistant to do the paperwork formerly done by Rentals chairs. The Board never compared the new Rentals strategy nor its increased expenses to those of prior years. Instead, they lowered the expected number of Rentals from 3 to 1.5 per month in the 2015-2016 Budget presumably hoping that the new co-chairs would not "burn out" and that fewer Club activities would be "bumped." This low estimate also provided a rationale for increasing the dues in 2016. An enduring accomplishment realized during President Sullivan's presidency was the nomination of the 1916 Clubhouse to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination process, which had been talked about for twenty years, was successfully completed by Margaret Feuer and Marilyn McDonnell. Placement on the National Register was a fitting prelude to the upcoming 100th Birthday of the Clubhouse.

The Club Archives contain no minutes from the Presidency of Carol Lippert (2015-2017.) From January through June 2016, the Club presented programs intended to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Clubhouse. The most memorable event of President Lippert's tenure was the increase of Club dues from \$150 to \$350 in 2016. Those opposed noted that the Club had cash assets of \$450,786 including a Capital Funds Reserve of \$172,511 and an Operating Reserve of \$67,150. Additionally, they argued that the dues increase was falsely predicated on a diminished Rentals income. Although the vote was 108 in favor of the increase and 107 opposed, the Board regarded the vote as a mandate. Forty members resigned. A healthy waiting list provided new members but the departure of long time members, many of whom had made significant contributions to the Club, was a wrenching event. Interestingly, the issue of the dues increase was not about cost but about a violation of the fundamental philosophy of the Club. For 123 years, the PAWC strove to make membership accessible to women from every economic stratum. While past boards had considered it their fiduciary duty to control expenses, President

Lippert's Board proposed a remodel of the Clubhouse totaling more than \$2 million over a three-year period. Members agreed to this proposal although architect Chris Wasney noted that none of the remodeling items was essential.

President Sue Krumbein (2017-2018) began her Presidency by overseeing the first \$400,000 stage of the Clubhouse remodel during the summer of 2017. The remainder of the two million dollar remodel was postponed until 2019. President Krumbein instituted an ambitious plan for increased use of the Clubhouse by members with a program called Club Days to begin in the Fall of 2017. Newsletters were discontinued for the first time since 1951. They were replaced by weekly email communications from the President. With Board approval, the PAWC along with the Palo Alto Library, applied for a grant from the California State Library to put the Club archives on the California Revealed website. Peggy McKee and Margaret Feuer of the History Committee coordinated this effort.

Conclusion: Some say that it's a man's world. At the founding of the Woman's Club, these words were absolutely true. Even the doctors, professors and writers among the Club members led lives circumscribed by limited opportunity outside the home. The Club's first President, Mary Campbell, who was herself a medical doctor, told the twenty-four women who met to form the Palo Alto Woman's Club in 1894 that, "Men form clubs for relaxation and recreation – women for concerted work. But this very work, so different from their home work, is both solace and recreation; if we pronounce it recreation we describe what it does for women." Today, the Palo Alto Woman's Club, to paraphrase Virginia Wolff, gives contemporary women a "room of their own." From that room, our members continue to encourage each other and to contribute to their community through hands-on and financial philanthropy.

Margaret R. Feuer



